This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

308
J45L

Frances Agnes Bowman
Memorial Collection
Presented by
Roger W. Montgomery, Esq.

Library Edition

The Writings of Thomas Jefferson

THE THOMAS JEFFERSON MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

The Powers Statue of Jefferson

Photogravure from the Marble Statue by Hiram Powers in the Capitol at Washington.

A splendid piece of work by the famous Vermont sculptor. It was purchased in 1855 for the sum of $10,000 by the United States Government. and placed in a niche at the bottom of the marble staircase leading to the gallery of the House of Representatives.

THE WRITINGS OF
THOMAS JEFFERSON

Library Edition

CONTAINING HIS

AUTOBIOGRAPHY, NOTES ON VIRGINIA, PARLIAMENTARY MANUAL, OFFICIAL PAPERS, MESSAGES AND ADDRESSES, AND OTHER WRITINGS, OFFICIAL AND PRIVATE, NOW COLLECTED AND

PUBLISHED IN THEIR ENTIRETY FOR THE FIRST TIME

INCLUDING

ALL OF THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS, DEPOSITED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND PUBLISHED IN 1853 BY ORDER OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS
AND
A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYTICAL INDEX

ANDREW A. LIPSCOMB, *Chairman Board of Governors*
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

ALBERT ELLERY BERGH
MANAGING EDITOR

VOL. XV.

ISSUED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF
THE THOMAS JEFFERSON MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION
OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D. C.
1904

449411

COPYRIGHT, 1904,
BY
THE THOMAS JEFFERSON MEMORIAL
ASSOCIATION

STANFORD LIBRARY

JEFFERSON IN HIS FAMILY.

Thomas Jefferson's life was so entirely devoted to the service of his country that it was not until after his second term as President that he may fairly be said to have lived any length of time with his family. In March, 1809, he returned to Virginia, took his daughter Martha with her husband, Governor Randolph, and their large family of children, with him to Monticello. There they remained seventeen years until his death, July 4, 1826, at the age of eighty-three.

He had always been passionately fond of domestic life, and his letters are filled with regrets that public duties kept him away from his home. The following passages, taken from a great many of similar character in his letters, may be quoted as evidence of this feeling:—

"Abstracted from home, I know no happiness in this world." (1780.)

"The happiest moments of my life have been the few which I have passed at home in the bosom of my family." (1790.)

"I employ my leisure moments in repassing often in my mind our happy domestic society, when

together at Monticello, and looking forward to the renewal of it. No other society gives me now any satisfaction, as no other is founded in sincere affection." (To Mrs. Eppes, 1800.)

In his old age he was at last to enjoy the blessing he had yearned for during so many years.

The best likeness we have of him is a side face by Stuart, which hung at Monticello. It is marked by great intellectuality, and the chin has indications of firmness, but the most vivid impression given by this medallion is sweetness and benevolence. It came in the natural course of events to my mother, who was the second daughter of Martha Jefferson and Governor Randolph. She was eleven years old when she moved to Monticello, where she remained until her twenty-seventh year, in 1825, when she married. She grew up there at the knee and by the side of the President, and being very intelligent was perhaps his favorite grandchild. Her morals and education were watched over by him with the greatest care. He directed all her studies and questioned her on all the books she read, leading her to give attention to the classics and mathematics as well as to feminine accomplishments. During all these years he never said an unkind word to any of his family, although he reproved them when he thought the occasion required it. He was full of the smallest and kindliest attentions to the children, and delighted them with any little gifts he thought they would particularly enjoy. What

seems to have struck my mother, as much as anything, was his truthfulness and his endeavor to impress on his grandchildren that nothing could justify falsehood. He praised industry, and considered a mind always employed as the true secret to happiness. He encouraged great attention to dress, and thought it the one thing in which economy was least to be recommended, because it was so important for husband and wife to please one another that the happiness of both required the most pointed attention to whatever might contribute to it. He put the greatest stress on cultivating the family affections, which were the only ones which could be depended upon to last through evil and good report, through misfortune and happiness.

The following anecdote, told me by my mother, may illustrate how he carried out in practice his advice to cultivate amiability at home. His son-in-law, Governor Thomas Mann Randolph, was a man of intelligence and integrity, but of a violent temper, which was soured by the loss of his ample fortune, caused by carelessness and a mistaken kindness which led him to endorse the notes of impecunious friends. He brooded over his misfortunes and at one time became so irritable that he refused to speak to Mr. Jefferson, by whom he and his family were supported. During the time that this aberration lasted it was the practice of the President, at every meal at which the Governor

was present, to address a remark to him, which, while acknowledging his presence with courtesy, required from him no answer. Can we wonder that his conversation and daily life made my mother look up to him and speak of him, even in her old age, as a saint?

He did not try to influence his grandchildren in any way in their religious views, and when they questioned him on any religious subject he told them that each was bound to study the matter for himself unbiased, by the opinions of others, that he was unwilling to express an opinion which might influence theirs.

His own religious views, which he kept to himself during his lifetime and for which he suffered much criticism, are now well known. He was what would be called to-day a conservative Unitarian, and shared the sentiments of Dr. Channing. He did not believe in the miracles, nor the divinity of Christ, nor the doctrine of the atonement, but he was a firm believer in Divine Providence, in the efficacy of prayer, in a future state of rewards and punishments, and in the meeting of friends in another world. His family were brought up in the Episcopal Church. He attended church with them regularly, and read the answers in the prayer book, and was liberal in his contributions.

His habits were very simple. He rose with the sun, read until breakfast time, rode on horseback about his place, looking after his farm or later at

the building of the University at Charlottesville, until dinner at about half-past three. He was so fond of the saddle that he continued to ride until near his death. When too feeble to mount, his old horse, Eagle, was brought up to the terrace to enable him to get on him without effort. He ate moderately, preferring vegetables to meat, took but little water, but usually three glasses of light French wine, of which he was fond. He never touched tobacco or spirits of any kind, objecting to the latter even on his death bed.

The afternoon, when not occupied by innumerable visitors, he gave to the society of his grandchildren. His manners to strangers were at first cold and reserved, but cordial to his friends. Lieutenant Hall describes him as "at first serious, nay, even cold, but in a very short time relaxing into a most agreeable amenity, with an unabated flow of conversation on the most interesting topics, discussed in the most gentlemanly and philosophical manner."

He was overwhelmed by correspondence, and a broken wrist made writing laborious. In a letter to John Adams he says, "From sunrise to one or two o'clock, and often from dinner to dark, I am drudging at the writing table, all this to answer letters into which neither interest nor inclination on my part enters, and often from persons whose names I have never before heard. This is the burden of my life, a very grievous one indeed, and one which I must get rid of."

After tea he read in his library from nine o'clock until he retired between ten and eleven. Cards he never touched, and I think there were none at Monticello. He slept in a small room, sparingly furnished, adjoining the library. He was in the habit, before going to sleep, of reading a book on some moral subject, to give him an object of thought during his periods of wakefulness.

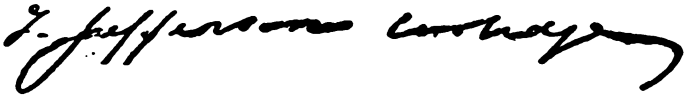
He treated his slaves with affection, trying to teach them trades, by which they could support themselves when freed, as it was always his intention to manumit the worthy ones. In his will he says, "I give to my good, affectionate and faithful servant, Burwell, his freedom and the sum of $300 to buy necessaries to commence his trade of painter and glazier or to use otherwise as he pleases. I give also to my good servants John Hemings and Joe Fosset their freedom, at the end of one year after my death: and to each of them respectively all the tools of their respective shops or callings: and it is my will that a comfortable log house be built for each of the three servants so emancipated, on some part of my lands. * * * I give also to John Hemings the service of his two apprentices, Madison and Eston Hemings, until their respective ages of twenty-one years, at which period, respectively, I give them their freedom."

He met his death with calmness and equanimity, in the full possession of his faculties, without an unkind feeling towards his worst enemies, surrounded

by his devoted family whom he had loved so well, and with the desire fulfilled that he should leave the world on the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

I have thus tried to give in a few words an insight into the family life of Jefferson. I refer those who wish for more information to the admirable life by H. S. Randall and to the "Domestic Life," by Sarah Randolph.

The world has never denied his vast information, his great intellectual powers, or his devotion to his country. This short sketch will, I trust, leave on the minds of many the impression that his family and friends were right in believing him to have been as good as he was great.



Connecticut and Rhode Island Signers

(Declaration of Independence)

The Reproductions are from the Original Paintings in Independence Hall, Philadelphia.

Oliver Wolcott (1726-1797) was born at Windsor, Conn. He was educated at Yale College, where he was graduated in 1747; the same year he received a captain's commission and raised a company that marched to the northern frontier and defended the border settlement. On his return he studied medicine, but gave it up when appointed sheriff of Litchfield County, in 1751. In 1775 he was sent by the Continental Congress as one of the commissioners to secure neutrality of the Indians in the contemplated war. He attended Congress in 1776, and after the signing of the Declaration returned to his State to take command of the frontier regiment of Connecticut militia ordered for the defense of New York. The following year he assisted General Gates with a body of volunteers in the defeat of Burgoyne. In 1786 he was elected Lieutenant-Governor of Connecticut and re-elected successively for ten years. The last year of his life he held the Governorship of the State. *(Reproduced from the Painting by Lambdin after the Original Painting by John Trumbull.)*

Roger Sherman (1721-1793) was born at Newton, Mass. During his early manhood he was a shoemaker, and in this way after his father's death supported his mother and her younger children. He studied constantly. In 1743 he went to New Milford, Conn., where he kept a small store in partnership with his elder brother. In 1745 he was appointed county surveyor. He applied himself to the study of law and was admitted to the Bar in 1754. A few years later he became Judge of the Court of Common Pleas. In 1774 he was appointed a member of Congress, where he remained up to the time of his death. In 1784 he was elected Mayor of New Haven. He was one of the most able members of the Constitution Convention of 1787. Jefferson held a high opinion of him and declared he had "never said a foolish thing in his life." *(Reproduced from the Painting by Hicks after the Original Painting by Earle.)*

William Williams (1731-1811) was born at Lebanon, Conn. In 1751 he was graduated at Harvard College. He then began to study theology, but in 1755 relinquished this course to join the regiment of Colonel Ephraim Williams, which engaged in the battle of Lake George. In 1773 he became a member of the Connecticut Committee of Correspondence, and two years later an active member of the Committee of Safety. After serving in the Legislature he was elected a member of the Continental Congress in 1775, and twice re-elected. He was a member of the convention of Connecticut which adopted the Federal Constitution. He wrote several essays inspiring the people to fight for freedom; for the same cause he gave nearly all his fortune. *(Reproduced from the Painting by Sawyer after the Original Painting by John Trumbull.)*

Stephen Hopkins (1707-1785) was born at Scituate, R. I. He was largely self-taught. He went to Providence to live in 1731 and engaged there in mercantile business. He became a Justice of the Peace and Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas in 1739 and of the Superior Court in 1751. Excepting four years, he was Governor of Rhode Island from 1754 to 1768. He served on many important committees, especially those of correspondence and the navy. He was a delegate to the Continental Congress in 1774 and remained there four years. He was a member of the Rhode Island Legislature and one of the committee that drafted the articles of confederation for the government of the State. He was Chancellor of Brown University for many years. *(Reproduced from the Painting by Lambdin after the Original Painting by John Trumbull.)*

William Ellery (1727-1820) was born at Newport, R. I. He was graduated at Harvard in 1747. While in commercial life he studied law and was admitted to the Bar. He was one of the earliest advocates of the freedom of the colonies. He was a delegate to the Continental Congress in 1776. He served on important committees relative to diplomacy and finance. He was appointed Commissioner of Loans in 1786. While Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Rhode Island he made efforts with Rufus King to abolish slavery in the United States. *(Reproduced from the Original Painting by Waugh.)*

Connecticut and Rhode Island Signers

(Declaration of Independence)

The Reproductions are from the Original Paintings in Independence Hall, Philadelphia.

Oliver Wolcott (1726-1797) was born at Windsor, Conn. He was educated at Yale College, where he was graduated in 1747; the same year he received a captain's commission and raised a company that marched to the northern frontier and defended the border settlement. On his return he studied medicine, but gave it up when appointed sheriff of Litchfield County, in 1751. In 1775 he was sent by the Continental Congress as one of the commissioners to secure neutrality of the Indians in the contemplated war. He attended Congress in 1776, and after the signing of the Declaration returned to his State to take command of the Connecticut militia ordered for the defense of New York. The following year he assisted Gates with a body of volunteers in the defeat of Burgoyne. In 1778 he was elected Lieutenant-Governor of Connecticut and re-elected successively for ten years. The last year of his life he held the Governorship of the State. (*Reproduced from the Painting by Lambdin after the Original Painting by John Trumbull.*)

Roger Sherman (1721-1793) was born at Newton, Mass. During his early manhood he was a shoemaker, and in this way after his father's death supported his mother and her younger children. He studied constantly. In 1743 he went to New Milford, Conn., where he kept a small store in partnership with his elder brother. In 1745 he was appointed county surveyor. He applied himself to the study of law and was admitted to the Bar in 1754. A few years later he became Judge of the Court of Common Pleas. In 1774 he was appointed a member of Congress, where he remained up to the time of his death. In 1783 he was elected Mayor of New Haven. He was one of the most able members of the Constitution Convention of 1787. Jefferson held a high opinion of him and declared he had "never said a foolish thing in his life." (*Reproduced from the Painting by Hicks after the Original Painting by Sharp.*)

William Williams (1731-1811) was born at Lebanon, Conn. In 1751 he was graduated at Harvard College. He then began to study theology, but in 1755 relinquished this course to join the regiment of Colonel Ephraim Williams, which engaged in the battle of Lake George. In 1773 he became a member of the Connecticut Committee of Correspondence, and two years later an active member of the Committee of Safety. After serving in the Legislature he was elected a member of the Continental Congress in 1776, and twice re-elected. He was a member of the convention of Connecticut which adopted the Federal Constitution. He wrote several essays inspiring the people to fight for freedom; for the same cause he gave nearly all his fortune. (*Reproduced from the Painting by Sawyer after the Original Painting by John Trumbull.*)

Stephen Hopkins (1707-1785) was born at Scituate, R. I. He was largely self-taught. He went to Providence to live in 1731 and engaged there in mercantile business. He became a Justice of the Peace and Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas in 1751 and of the Superior Court in 1751. Excepting four years, he was Governor of Rhode Island from 1755 to 1768. He served on many important committees, especially those of correspondence and the navy. He was a delegate to the Continental Congress in 1774 and remained there four years. He was a member of the Rhode Island Legislature and one of the committee that drafted the articles of confederation for the government of the State. He was Chancellor of Brown University for many years. (*Reproduced from the Painting by Lambdin after the Original Painting by John Trumbull.*)

William Ellery (1727-1820) was born at Newport, R. I. He was graduated at Harvard in 1747. While in commercial life he studied law and was admitted to the Bar. He was one of the earliest advocates of the freedom of the colonies. He was a delegate to the Continental Congress in 1776. He served on important committees relative to diplomacy and finance. He was appointed Commissioner of Loans in 1785. While Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Rhode Island he made efforts with Rufus King to abolish slavery in the United States. (*Reproduced from the Original Painting by Waugh.*)

OLIVER WOLCOTT

ROGER SHERMAN

WILLIAM WILLIAMS

STEPHEN HOPKINS

WILLIAM ELLERY

CONTENTS.

PAGE

JEFFERSON IN HIS FAMILY. By Hon. Thomas Jefferson Coolidge, formerly U. S. Minister to France.. i

LETTERS WRITTEN AFTER HIS RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES, 1789–1826..... 1–494

To F. A. Van Der Kemp, April 25, 1816..... 1

To Monsieur Correa de Serra, April 26, 1816 3

John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, May 3, 1816.. 8

John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, May 6, 1816.. 12

To John Taylor, May 28, 1816..... 17

To Francis W. Gilmer, June 7, 1816..... 23

To William H. Crawford, June 20, 1816..... 27

To Samuel Kercheval, July 12, 1816..... 32

To John Taylor, July 16, 1816..... 44

To Governor Plumer, July 21, 1816..... 46

To Dr. George Logan, July 23, 1816..... 47

To Joseph Delaplaine, July 26, 1816..... 49

To Sir John Sinclair, July 31, 1816..... 51

To John Adams, August 1, 1816..... 56

To Mrs. M. Harrison Smith, August 6, 1816.... 59

John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, August 9, 1816 61

To Isaac H. Tiffany, August 26, 1816..... 65

John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, September 3, 1816 66

To Samuel Kercheval, September 5, 1816..... 70

To John Adams, October 14, 1816..... 73

To the Secretary of State (James Monroe), October 16, 1816..... 78

LETTERS WRITTEN AFTER HIS RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES, 1789–1826—*Continued.* PAGE

To John Adams, November 25, 1816..... 81
John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, December 16, 1816 87
To John Melish, December 31, 1816..... 93
To Mrs. Abigail Adams, January 11, 1817..... 95
To John Adams, January 11, 1817..... 97
To William Lee, January 16, 1817..... 100
To Dr. Thomas Humphreys, February 8, 1817.. 102
John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, April 19, 1817. 103
To John Adams, May 5, 1817..... 108
To Dr. Josephus B. Stuart, May 10, 1817..... 111
To Marquis de Lafayette, May 14, 1817..... 114
John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, May 18, 1817. 118
John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, May 26, 1817. 121
To Dr. John Manners, June 12, 1817..... 124
To Baron Alexander Von Humboldt, June 13, 1817 126
To Monsieur Barré De Marbois, June 14, 1817.. 129
To Albert Gallatin, June 16, 1817..... 131
To John Adams, September 8, 1817..... 136
To George Flower, September 12, 1817..... 139
John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, October 10, 1817 142
To John Quincy Adams, November 1, 1817.... 144
To P. S. Duponceau, November 7, 1817..... 150
To J. Correa de Serra, November 25, 1817 153
To P. S. Duponceau, December 30, 1817..... 157
To William Wirt, January 5, 1818..... 160
To Dr. Benjamin Waterhouse, March 3, 1818.. 162
To Nathaniel Burwell, March 14, 1818..... 165
To John Adams, May 17, 1818..... 168
To M. A. Jullien, July 23, 1818..... 171
To John Adams, November 13, 1818..... 174

LETTERS WRITTEN AFTER HIS RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES, 1789–1826—*Continued.* PAGE

To Robert Walsh, December 4, 1818..... 175
To Monsieur de Neuville, December 13, 1818 177
To Nathaniel Macon, January 12, 1819..... 179
To John Adams, March 21, 1819..... 181
To Dr. Vine Utley, March 21, 1819..... 186
To Horatio G. Spafford, May 11, 1819..... 189
To Samuel Adams Wells, May 12, 1819..... 191
To Ezra Styles, June 25, 1819..... 202
To John Adams, July 9, 1819..... 204
To John Brazier, August 24, 1819..... 207
To Judge Spencer Roane, September 6, 1819.. 212
To Nathaniel F. Moore, September 22, 1819.... 216
To William Short, October 31, 1819..... 219
To John Adams, November 7, 1819..... 224
To Colonel John Nicholas, November 10, 1819.. 225
To William C. Rives, November 28, 1819..... 229
To John Adams, December 10, 1819..... 232
John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, December 21, 1819 235
To Hugh Nelson, March 12, 1820..... 238
To John Adams, March 14, 1820..... 239
To Mark Langdon Hill, April 5, 1820..... 242
To William Short, April 13, 1820..... 243
To John Holmes, April 22, 1820..... 248
To the President of the United States (James Monroe), May 14, 1820..... 251
To General Robert Taylor, May 16, 1820..... 252
To William Short, August 4, 1820..... 257
To Dr. Thomas Cooper, August 14, 1820..... 264
To John Adams, August 15, 1820..... 269
To William Charles Jarvis, September 28, 1820. 276
To Charles Pinckney, September 30, 1820..... 279
To Richard Rush, October 20, 1820..... 281

LETTERS WRITTEN AFTER HIS RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES, 1789–1826—*Continued.* PAGE

To J. Correa de Serra, October 24, 1820 285
To Rev. Jared Sparks, November 4, 1820..... 287
To Joseph C. Cabell, November 28, 1820..... 289
To James Madison, November 29, 1820 294
To Thomas Ritchie, December 25, 1820..... 295
To the Marquis de Lafayette, December 26, 1820 . 299
To William Roscoe, December 27, 1820..... 302
To Francis Eppes, January 19, 1821..... 304
To Archibald Thweat, January 19, 1821..... 306
To John Adams, January 22, 1821..... 308
To Joseph C. Cabell, January 31, 1821..... 310
To Jared Mansfield, February 13, 1821..... 313
To General James Breckenridge, February 15, 1821 314
To Dabney Terrell, February 26, 1821..... 318
To Timothy Pickering, February 27, 1821..... 322
To Judge Spencer Roane, June 27, 1821..... 326
To General Henry Dearborn, August 17, 1821.. 329
To Charles Hammond, August 18, 1821..... 330
To John Adams, September 12, 1821..... 333
John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, September 24, 1821 335
To ————, September 28, 1821..... 337
To Nathaniel Macon, November 23, 1821..... 340
To ————, November 29, 1821..... 342
To ——— Nicholas December 11, 1821 350
To Messrs. George W. Summers and John B. Garland, February 27, 1822..... 352
To Edward Everett, March 2, 1822..... 354
To Jedediah Morse, March 6, 1822..... 356
To General James Breckinridge, April 9, 1822.. 362
To Messrs. Ritchie and Gooch, May 13, 1822.. 365
To John Adams, June 1, 1822 370

LETTERS WRITTEN AFTER HIS RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES, 1789–1826—*Continued.*

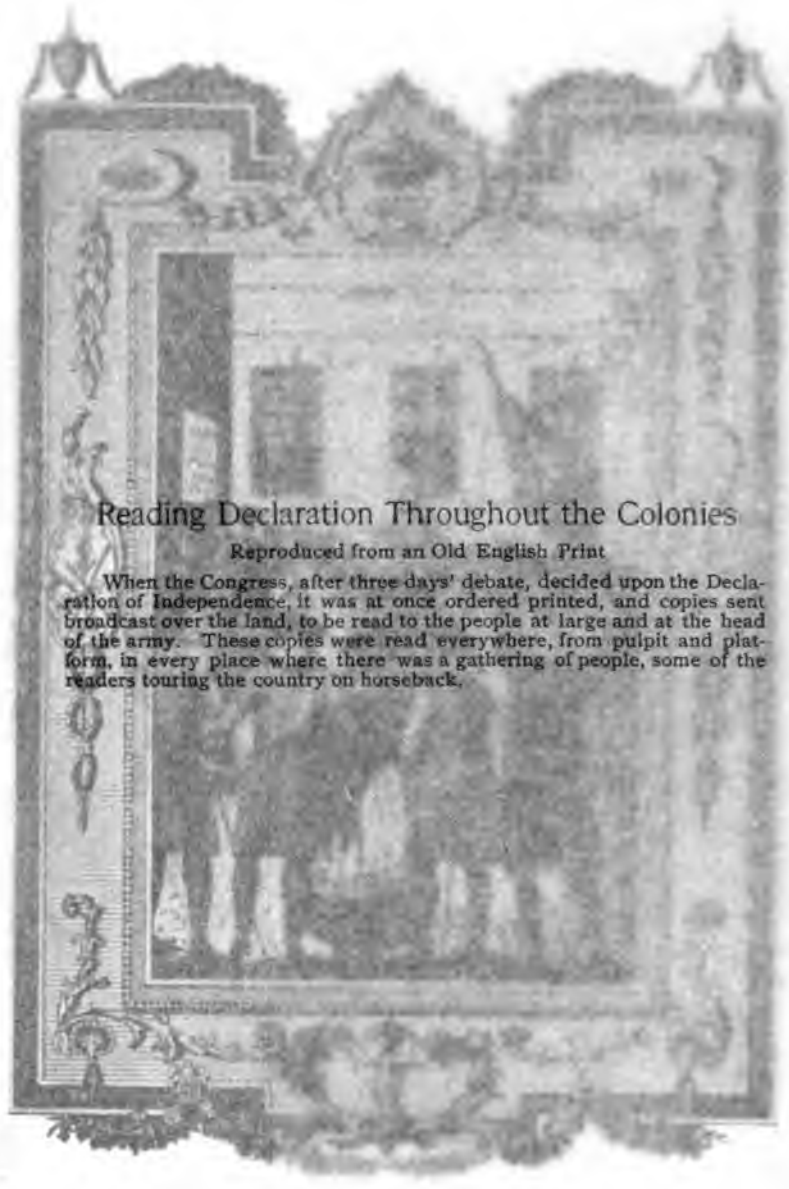
PAGE

To Rev. Thomas Whittemore, June 5, 1822.... 373
To Messrs. Ritchie and Gooch, June 10, 1822.. 374
To John M. Goodenow, June 13, 1822..... 382
To Dr. Benjamin Waterhouse, June 26, 1822.. 383
To John Adams, June 27, 1822..... 386
To William T. Barry, July 2, 1822..... 388
To Dr. Benjamin Waterhouse, July 19, 1822.. 390
To Thomas Skidman, August 29, 1822..... 392
To George F. Hopkins, September 5, 1822.... 394
To Chiles Terril, September 25, 1822..... 395
John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, October 15, 1822 397
To Cornelius Camden Blatchly, October 21, 1822. 399
To John Adams, November 1, 1822..... 400
To Dr. Thomas Cooper, November 2, 1822.... 403
To John Campbell, November 10, 1822..... 407
To James Smith, December 8, 1822..... 408
To Edward Everett, February 24, 1823..... 410
To John Adams, February 25, 1823..... 416
To Judge William Johnson, March 4, 1823.... 419
John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, March 10, 1823 423
To John Adams, April 11, 1823..... 425
To General Samuel Smith, May 3, 1823..... 430
To Michael Megear, May 29, 1823..... 433
To the President of the United States (James Monroe), June 11, 1823..... 435
To Judge William Johnson, June 12, 1823.... 439
To the President of the United States (James Monroe), June 23, 1823..... 452
To George Ticknor, July 16, 1823..... 454
John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, August 15, 1823 457
To James Madison, August 30, 1823..... 460
To John Adams, September 4, 1823..... 464

Contents

LETTERS WRITTEN AFTER HIS RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES, 1789–1826—*Continued.* PAGE

To William Short, September 8, 1823..... 467
To Thomas Earle, September 24, 1823..... 470
To Hugh P. Taylor, October 4, 1823..... 471
To John Adams, October 12, 1823..... 474
To the President of the United States (James Monroe), October 24, 1823..... 477
To Monsieur A. Coray, October 31, 1823..... 480
To the Marquis de Lafayette, November 4, 1823.. 490



Reading Declaration Throughout the Colonies

Reproduced from an Old English Print

When the Congress, after three days' debate, decided upon the Declaration of Independence, it was at once ordered printed, and copies sent broadcast over the land, to be read to the people at large and at the head of the army. These copies were read everywhere, from pulpit and platform, in every place where there was a gathering of people, some of the readers touring the country on horseback.

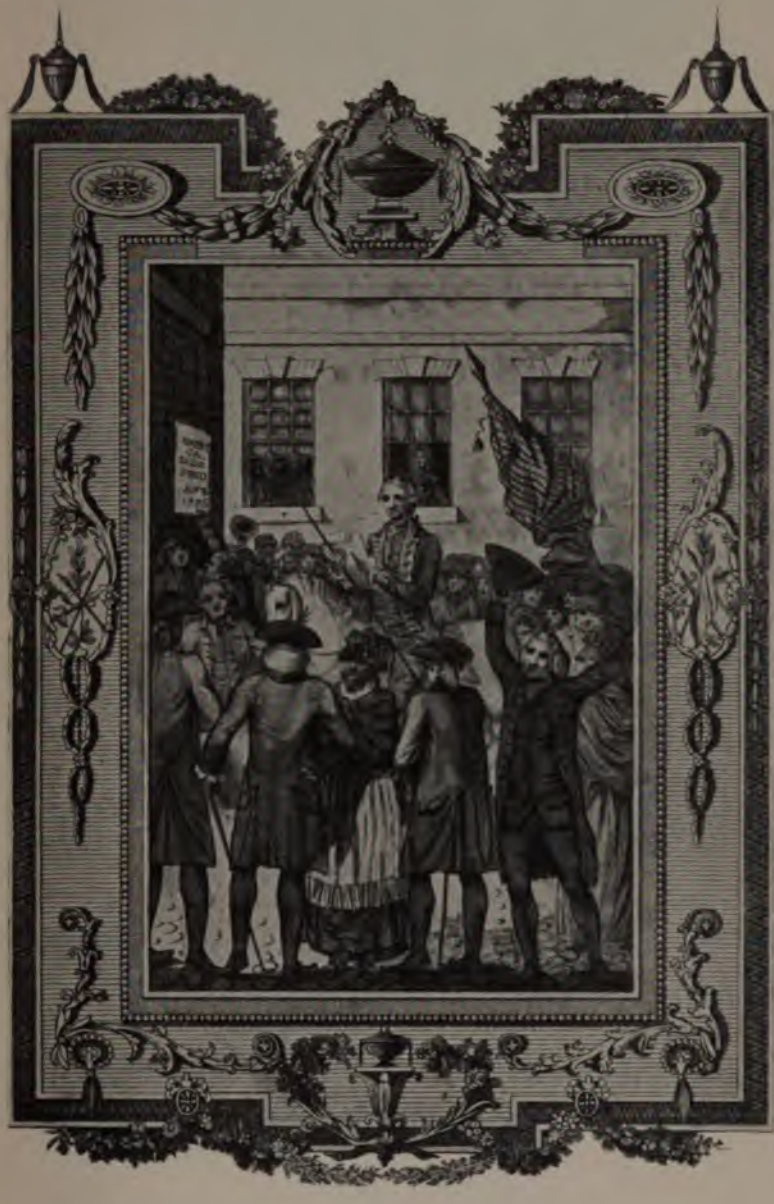
[illegible] CHE

	PAGE
[illegible]	467
[illegible]	470
[illegible]	471
[illegible]	474
State [illegible] Letters	
[illegible]	477
[illegible]	480
[illegible]	490

Reading Declaration Through the [illegible]

Reproduced from an old English [illegible]

When the Congress, after three days of [illegible] the Declaration of Independence, it was at once [illegible] printed [illegible] copies [illegible] broadcast over the land, to be read to the people [illegible] of the army. These copies were read everywhere [illegible] platform, in every place where there was a gathering of people [illegible] readers touring the country [illegible]



ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE POWERS JEFFERSON . . . . . *Frontispiece*

Photogravure from the Marble Statue by Hiram Powers in the Capitol at Washington.

FACING PAGE

CONNECTICUT AND RHODE ISLAND SIGNERS viii

Reproduced from the Original Paintings in Independence Hall, Philadelphia.

READING DECLARATION THROUGHOUT THE COLONIES xiv

Reproduced from an Old English Print.

MONROE DOCTRINE LETTER 476

Facsimile of Jefferson's Original Letter of October 24, 1823, to President James Monroe.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LETTERS WRITTEN AFTER HIS RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES.

1789–1826.

(CONTINUED.)

JEFFERSON'S WORKS.

LETTERS WRITTEN AFTER HIS RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES.

1789–1826.

TO F. A. VAN DER KEMP.

POPLAR FOREST, April 25, 1816.

SIR,—Your favor of March 24th was handed to me just as I was setting out on a journey of time and distance, which will explain the date of this both as to time and place. The Syllabus, which is the subject of your letter, was addressed to a friend to whom I had promised a more detailed view. But finding I should never have time for that, I sent him what I thought should be the outlines of such a work; the same subject entering sometimes into the correspondence between Mr. Adams and myself, I sent him a copy of it. The friend to whom it had been first addressed, dying soon after, I asked from his family the return of the original, as a confidential

communication, which they kindly sent me. So that no copy of it, but that in the possession of Mr. Adams, now exists out of my own hands. I have used this caution lest it should get out in connection with my name; and I was unwilling to draw on myself a swarm of insects, whose buzz is more disquieting than their bite. As an abstract thing, and without any intimation from what quarter derived, I can have no objection to its being committed to the consideration of the world. I believe it may even do good by producing discussion, and finally a true view of the merits of this great Reformer. Pursuing the same ideas after writing the Syllabus, I made, for my own satisfaction, an extract from the Evangelists of His morals, selecting those only whose style and spirit proved them genuine, and His own; and they are as distinguishable from the matter in which they are imbedded as diamonds in dunghills. A more precious morsel in ethics was never seen. It was too hastily done, however, being the work of one or two evenings only, while I lived at Washington, overwhelmed with other business, and it is my intention to go over it again at more leisure. This shall be the work of the ensuing winter. I gave it the title of "The Philosophy of Jesus Extracted from the Text of the Evangelists." To this Syllabus and Extract, if a history of His life can be added, written with the same view of the subject, the world will see, after the fogs shall be dispelled, in which for fourteen centuries He has been enveloped by jugglers to make money of

Him, when the genuine character shall be exhibited, which they have dressed up in the rags of an impostor, the world, I say, will at length see the immortal merit of this first of human sages. I rejoice that you think of undertaking this work. It is one I have long wished to see written of the scale of a Laertius or a Nepos. Nor can it be a work of labor, or of volume, for His journeyings from Judea to Samaria, and Samaria to Galilee, do not cover much country; and the incidents of His life require little research. They are all at hand, and need only to be put into human dress; noticing such only as are within the physical laws of nature, and offending none by a denial or even a mention of what is not. If the Syllabus and Extract (which is short) either in substance, or at large, are worth a place under the same cover with your biography, they are at your service. I ask one only condition, that no possibility shall be admitted of my name being even intimated with the publication. If done in England, as you seem to contemplate, there will be the less likelihood of my being thought of. I shall be much gratified to learn that you pursue your intention of writing the life of Jesus, and pray you to accept the assurances of my great respect and esteem.

TO MONSIEUR CORREA DE SERRA.

POPLAR FOREST, April 26, 1816.

DEAR SIR,—Your favor of March 29th was received, just as I was setting out for this place. I

brought it with me to be answered hence. Since you are so kind as to interest yourself for Captain Lewis' papers, I will give you a full statement of them.

1. Ten or twelve such pocket volumes, morocco bound, as that you describe, in which, in his own handwriting, he had journalized all occurrences, day by day, as he travelled. They were small 8vos, and opened at the end for more convenient writing. Every one had been put into a separate tin case, cemented to prevent injury from wet, but on his return the cases, I presume, had been taken from them, as he delivered me the books uncased. There were in them the figures of some animals, drawn with the pen while on his journey. The gentleman who published his travels must have had these MS. volumes, and perhaps now has them, or can give some account of them.

2. Descriptions of animals and plants. I do not recollect whether there was such a book or collection of papers, distinct from his journal, although I am inclined to think there was one: because his travels as published, do not contain all the new animals of which he had either descriptions or specimens. Mr. Peale, I think, must know something of this, as he drew figures of some of the animals for engraving, and some were actually engraved. Perhaps Conrad, his bookseller, who was to have published the work, can give an account of these.

3. Vocabularies. I had myself made a collection

of about forty vocabularies of the Indians on this side of the Mississippi, and Captain Lewis was instructed to take those of every tribe beyond, which he possibly could. The intention was to publish the whole, and leave the world to search for affinities between these and the languages of Europe and Asia. He was furnished with a number of printed vocabularies of the same words and form I had used, with blank spaces for the Indian words. He was very attentive to this instruction, never missing an opportunity of taking a vocabulary. After his return, he asked me if I should have any objection to the printing his separately, as mine were not yet arranged as I intended. I assured him I had not the least; and I am certain he contemplated their publication. But whether he had put the papers out of his own hand or not, I do not know. I imagine he had not; and it is probable that Doctor Barton, who was particularly curious on this subject, and published on it occasionally, would willingly receive and take care of these papers after Captain Lewis' death, and that they are now among his papers.

4. His observations of longitude and latitude. He was instructed to send these to the War Office, that measures might be taken to have the calculations made. Whether he delivered them to the War Office, or to Dr. Patterson, I do not know, but I think he communicated with Dr. Patterson concerning them. These are all important, because although, having with him the nautical almanacs, he could and

did calculate some of his latitudes, yet the longitudes were taken merely from estimates by the log-line, time, and course. So that it is only as latitudes that his map may be considered as tolerably correct; not as to its longitudes.

5. His Map. This was drawn on sheets of paper, not put together, but so marked that they could be joined together with the utmost accuracy; not as one great square map, but ramifying with the courses of the rivers. The scale was very large, and the sheets numerous, but in perfect preservation. This was to await publication, until corrected by the calculations of longitude and latitude. I examined these sheets myself minutely, as spread on a floor, and the originals must be in existence, as the map published with his travels must have been taken from them.

These constitute the whole. They are the property of the government, the fruits of the expedition undertaken at such expense of money, and risk of valuable lives. They contain exactly the whole of the information which it was our object to obtain, for the benefit of our own country and of the world. But we were willing to give to Lewis and Clarke whatever pecuniary benefits might be derived from the publication, and therefore left the papers in their hands, taking for granted that their interests would produce a speedy publication, which would be better if done under their direction. But the death of Captain Lewis, the distance and occupations of General Clarke, and the bankruptcy of their bookseller, have

retarded the publication, and rendered it necessary that the government should attend to the reclamation and security of the papers; their recovery is now become an imperious duty. Their safest deposit, as fast as they can be collected, will be the Philosophical Society, who no doubt will be so kind as to receive and preserve them, subject to the orders of government; and their publication once effected in any way, the originals will probably be left in the same deposit. As soon as I can learn their present situation, I will lay the matter before the government to take such order as they think proper. As to any claims of individuals to these papers, it is to be observed that, as being the property of the public, we are certain neither Lewis nor Clarke would undertake to convey away the right to them, had they been capable of intending it. Yet no interest of that kind is meant to be disturbed, if the individual can give satisfactory assurance that he will promptly and properly publish them; otherwise they must be restored to the government, and the claimant left to settle with those on whom he has any claim. My interference will, I trust, be excused, not only from the portion which every citizen has in whatever is public, but from the peculiar part I have had in the design and execution of this expedition.

To you, my friend, apology is due for involving you in the trouble of this inquiry. It must be found in the interest you take in whatever belongs to science, and in your own kind offers to me of aid in

this research. Be assured always of my affectionate friendship and respect.

JOHN ADAMS TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

QUINCY, May 3, 1816.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of April 8th has long since been received.

J. "Would you agree to live your eighty years over again?"

A. ——.

J. "Would you agree to live your eighty years over again forever?"

A. I once heard our acquaintance, Chew, of Philadelphia, say, "he should like to go back to twenty-five, to all eternity;" but I own my soul would start and shrink back on itself at the prospect of an endless succession of *Boules de Savon*, almost as much as at the certainty of annihilation. For what is human life? I can speak only for one. I have had more comfort than distress, more pleasure than pain ten to one, nay, if you please, an hundred to one. A pretty large dose, however, of distress and pain. But after all, what is human life? A vapor, a fog, a dew, a cloud, a blossom, a flower, a rose, a blade of grass, a glass bubble, a tale told by an idiot, a *Boule de Savon*, vanity of vanities, an eternal succession of which would terrify me almost as much as annihilation.

J. "Would you prefer to live over again, rather

than accept the offer of a better life in a future state?"

A. Certainly not.

J. "Would you live again rather than change for the worse in a future state, for the sake of trying something new?"

A. Certainly yes.

J. "Would you live over again once or forever, rather than run the risk of annihilation, or of a better or a worse state at or after death?"

A. Most certainly I would not.

J. "How valiant you are!"

A. Aye, at this moment, and at all other moments of my life that I can recollect; but who can tell what will become of his bravery when his flesh and his heart shall fail him? Bolingbroke said "his philosophy was not sufficient to support him in his last hours." D'Alembert said: "Happy are they who have courage, but I have none." Voltaire, the greatest genius of them all, behaved like the greatest coward of them all at his death, as he had like the wisest fool of them all in his lifetime. Hume awkwardly affected to sport away all sober thoughts. Who can answer for his last feelings and reflections, especially as the priests are in possession of the custom of making them the greatest engines of their craft. *Procul est prophani!*

J. "How shall we, how can we estimate the real value of human life?"

A. I know not; I cannot weigh sensations and

reflections, pleasures and pains, hopes and fears, in money-scales. But I can tell you how I have heard it estimated by philosophers. One of my old friends and clients, a mandamus counsellor against his will, a man of letters and virtues, without one vice that I ever knew or suspected, except garrulity, William Vassall, asserted to me, and strenuously maintained, that "*pleasure is no compensation for pain.*" "An hundred years of the keenest delights of human life could not atone for one hour of bilious colic that he had felt." The sublimity of this philosophy my dull genius could not reach. I was willing to state a fair account between pleasure and pain, and give credit for the balance, which I found very great in my favor.

Another philosopher, who, as we say, believed nothing, ridiculed the notion of a future state. One of the company asked, "Why are you an enemy to a future state? Are you weary of life? Do you detest existence?" "Weary of life? Detest existence?" said the philosopher. "No! I love life so well, and am so attached to existence, that to be sure of immortality, I would consent to be pitched about with forks by the devils, among flames of fire and brimstone, to all eternity."

I find no resources in my courage for this exalted philosophy. I had rather be blotted out.

Il faut trancher cet mot! What is there in life to attach us to it but the hope of a future and a better? It is a cracker, a rocket, a fire-work at best.

I admire your navigation, and should like to sail

with you, either in your bark, or in my own alongside of yours. Hope with her gay ensigns displayed at the prow, fear with her hobgoblins behind the stern. Hope springs eternal, and hope is all that endures. Take away hope and what remains? What pleasure, I mean? Take away fear, and what pain remains? Ninety-nine one-hundredths of the pleasures and pains of life are nothing but hopes and fears.

All nations known in history or in travels, have hoped, believed and expected a future and a better state. The Maker of the universe, the cause of all things, whether we call it *fate*, or *chance*, or GOD, has inspired this hope. If it is a *fraud*, we shall never know it. We shall never resent the imposition, be grateful for the illusion, nor grieve for the disappointment. We shall be no more. Credit Grimm, Diderot, Buffon, La Lande, Condorcet, D'Holbach, Frederick, Catharine; *non ego*. Arrogant as it may be, I shall take the liberty to pronounce them all *Idiologians*. Yet I would not persecute a hair of their heads. The world is wide enough for them and me.

Suppose the cause of the universe should reveal to all mankind at once a *certainty* that they must all die within a century, and that death is an eternal extinction of all living powers, of all sensation and reflection. What would be the effect? Would there be one man, woman or child existing on this globe, twenty years hence? Would not every human being be a Madame Deffand, Voltaire's "Aveugle clairvoyante," all her lifetime regretting her existence,

bewailing that she had ever been born, grieving that she had ever been dragged, without her consent, into being? Who would bear the gout, the stone, the colic, for the sake of a *Boule de Savon*, when a pistol, a cord, a pond, or a phial of laudanum was at hand? What would men say to their Maker? Would they thank Him? No; they would reproach Him; they would curse Him to His face. *Voila!*

A sillier letter than my last. For a wonder, I have filled a sheet, and a greater wonder, I have read fifteen volumes of Grimm. *Digito comesse labellum.* I hope to write you more upon this and other topics of your letter. I have read also a History of the Jesuits, in four volumes. Can you tell me the author, or anything of this work?

JOHN ADAMS TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

QUINCY, May 6, 1816.

DEAR SIR,—Neither eyes, fingers nor paper held out to despatch all the trifles I wished to write in my last letter.

In your favor of April 8th you "wonder for what good end the sensations of grief could be intended?" "You wish the pathologists would tell us, what is the use of grief in our economy, and of what good it is the cause proximate or remote." When I approach such questions as this, I consider myself, like one of those little eels in Vinaigre, or one of those animalcules in black or red pepper, or in the horse-radish root,

that bite our tongues so cruelly, reasoning upon the τὸ πᾶν. Of what use is this sting upon the tongue? Why might we not have the benefit of these stimulants, without the sting? Why might we not have the fragrance and beauty of the rose without the thorn?

In the first place, however, we know not the connection between pleasure and pain. They seem to be mechanical and inseparable. How can we conceive a strong passion, a sanguine hope suddenly disappointed, without producing pain, or grief? Swift at seventy, recollected the fish he had angled out of water when a boy, which broke loose from his hook; and said, I feel the disappointment at this moment. A merchant places all his fortune and all his credit in a single India or China ship. She arrives at the Vineyard with a cargo worth a million, in order. Sailing round a cape for Boston, a sudden storm wrecks her—ship, cargo and crew, all lost. Is it possible that the merchant ruined, bankrupt, sent to prison by his creditors—his wife and children starving—should not grieve? Suppose a young couple, with every advantage of persons, fortunes and connections, on the point of indissoluble union. A flash of lightning, or any one of those millions of accidents which are allotted to humanity, proves fatal to one of the lovers. Is it possible that the other, and all the friends of both, should not grieve? It seems that grief, as a mere passion, must be in proportion to sensibility.

Did you ever see a portrait, or a statue of a great man, without perceiving strong traits of pain and anxiety? These furrows were all ploughed in the countenance, by grief. Our juridical oracle, Sir Edward Coke, thought that none were fit for legislators and magistrates, but "*sad men.*" And who were these sad men? They were aged men, who had been tossed and buffeted in the vicissitudes of life—forced upon profound reflection by grief and disappointments—and taught to command their passions and prejudices.

But all this you will say is nothing to the purpose. It is only repeating and exemplifying a *fact*, which my question supposed to be well known, viz., the existence of grief; and is no answer to my question, "what are the uses of grief?" This is very true, and you are very right; but may not the uses of grief be inferred, or at least suggested by such exemplifications of known facts? Grief compels the India merchant to think; to reflect upon the plans of his voyage: Have I not been rash, to trust my fortune, my family, my liberty, to the caprices of winds and waves in a single ship? I will never again give a loose to my imagination and avarice. It had been wiser and more honest to have traded on a smaller scale upon my own capital.

The desolated lover, and disappointed connections, are compelled by their grief to reflect on the vanity of human wishes and expectations; to learn the essential lesson of resignation; to review their own

conduct towards the deceased; to correct any errors or faults in their future conduct towards their remaining friends, and towards all men; to recollect the virtues of the lost friend, and resolve to imitate them; his follies and vices if he had any, and resolve to avoid them.

Grief drives men into habits of serious reflection, sharpens the understanding, and softens the heart; it compels them to arouse their reason, to assert its empire over their passions, propensities and prejudices; to elevate them to a superiority over all human events; to give them the *felicis annimi immota tranquilitatum;* in short, to make them stoics and Christians. After all, as grief is a pain, it stands in the predicament of all other evil, and the great question occurs, what is the origin, and what the final cause of evil? This perhaps is known only to Omniscience. We poor mortals have nothing to do with it—but to fabricate all the good we can out of all inevitable evils—and to avoid all that are avoidable, and many such there are, among which are our own unnecessary apprehensions and imaginary fears. Though stoical apathy is impossible, yet patience, and resignation, and tranquillity may be acquired by consideration, in a great degree, very much for the happiness of life.

I have read Grimm, in fifteen volumes, of more than five hundred pages each. I will not say like Uncle Toby, "You shall not die till you have read him." But you ought to read him, if possible. It is the most entertaining work I ever read. He

appears exactly as you represent him. What is most remarkable of all is his impartiality. He spares no characters but Necker and Diderot. Voltaire, Buffon, D'Alembert, Helvetius, Rousseau, Marmontel, Condorcet, La Harpe, Beaumarchais, and all others, are lashed without ceremony. Their portraits as faithfully drawn as possible. It is a complete review of French literature and fine arts from 1753 to 1790. No politics. Criticisms very just. Anecdotes without number, and very merry. One ineffably ridiculous, I wish I could send you, but it is immeasurably long. D'Argens, a little out of health and shivering with the cold in Berlin, asked leave of the King to take a ride to Gascony, his native province. He was absent so long that Frederick concluded the air of the south of France was like to detain his friend; and as he wanted his society and services, he contrived a trick to bring him back. He fabricated a mandement in the name of the Archbishop of Aix, commanding all the faithful to seize the Marquis D'Argens, author of Ocellus, Timaus and Julian, works atheistical, deistical, heretical and impious in the highest degree. This mandement, composed in a style of ecclesiastical eloquence that never was exceeded by Pope, Jesuit, Inquisitor, or Sorbonite, he sent in print by a courier to D'Argens, who, frightened out of his wit, fled by cross roads out of France, and back to Berlin, to the greater joy of the philosophical court; for the laugh of Europe, which they had raised at the expense of the learned Marquis.

I do not like the late resurrection of the Jesuits. They have a general now in Russia, in correspondence with the Jesuits in the United States, who are more numerous than everybody knows. Shall we not have swarms of them here? In as many shapes and disguises as ever a king of the Gypsies—Bamfield Morecarew himself, assumed? In the shape of printers, editors, writers, schoolmasters, etc. I have lately read Pascal's letters over again, and four volumes of the history of the Jesuits. If ever any congregation of men could merit eternal perdition on earth and in hell, according to these historians, though like Pascal true Catholics, it is this company Loyola. Our system, however, of religious liberty must afford them an asylum. But if they do not put the purity of our elections to a severe trial, it will be a wonder.

TO JOHN TAYLOR.

MONTICELLO, May 28, 1816.

DEAR SIR,—On my return from a long journey and considerable absence from home, I found here the copy of your "Enquiry into the Principles of our Government," which you had been so kind as to send me; and for which I pray you to accept my thanks. The difficulties of getting new works in our situation, inland and without a single bookstore, are such as had prevented my obtaining a copy before; and letters which had accumulated during my absence,

and were calling for answers, have not yet permitted me to give to the whole a thorough reading; yet certain that you and I could not think differently on the fundamentals of rightful government, I was impatient, and availed myself of the intervals of repose from the writing-table, to obtain a cursory idea of the body of the work.

I see in it much matter for profound reflection; much which should confirm our adhesion, in practice, to the good principles of our Constitution, and fix our attention on what is yet to be made good. The sixth section on the good moral principles of our government, I found so interesting and replete with sound principles, as to postpone my letter-writing to its thorough perusal and consideration. Besides much other good matter, it settles unanswerably the right of instructing representatives, and their duty to obey. The system of banking we have both equally and ever reprobated. I contemplate it as a blot left in all our Constitutions, which, if not covered, will end in their destruction, which is already hit by the gamblers in corruption, and is sweeping away in its progress the fortunes and morals of our citizens. Funding I consider as limited, rightfully, to a redemption of the debt within the lives of a majority of the generation contracting it; every generation coming equally, by the laws of the Creator of the world, to the free possession of the earth He made for their subsistence, unincumbered by their predecessors, who, like them, were but tenants for life. You have successfully and

completely pulverized Mr. Adams' system of orders, and his opening the mantle of republicanism to every government of laws, whether consistent or not with natural right. Indeed, it must be acknowledged, that the term *republic* is of very vague application in every language. Witness the self-styled republics of Holland, Switzerland, Genoa, Venice, Poland. Were I to assign to this term a precise and definite idea, I would say, purely and simply, it means a government by its citizens in mass, acting directly and personally, according to rules established by the majority; and that every other government is more or less republican, in proportion as it has in its composition more or less of this ingredient of the direct action of the citizens. Such a government is evidently restrained to very narrow limits of space and population. I doubt if it would be practicable beyond the extent of a New England township. The first shade from this pure element, which, like that of pure vital air, cannot sustain life of itself, would be where the powers of the government, being divided, should be exercised each by representatives chosen either *pro hac vice*, or for such short terms as should render secure the duty of expressing the will of their constituents. This I should consider as the nearest approach to a pure republic, which is practicable on a large scale of country or population. And we have examples of it in some of our State Constitutions, which, if not poisoned by priest-craft, would prove its excellence over all mixtures with other ele-

ments; and, with only equal doses of poison, would still be the best. Other shades of republicanism may be found in other forms of government, where the executive, judiciary and legislative functions, and the different branches of the latter, are chosen by the people more or less directly, for longer terms of years, or for life, or made hereditary; or where there are mixtures of authorities, some dependent on, and others independent of the people. The further the departure from direct and constant control by the citizens, the less has the government of the ingredient of republicanism; evidently none where the authorities are hereditary, as in France, Venice, etc., or self-chosen, as in Holland; and little, where for life, in proportion as the life continues in being after the act of election.

The purest republican feature in the government of our own State, is the House of Representatives. The Senate is equally so the first year, less the second, and so on. The Executive still less, because not chosen by the people directly. The Judiciary seriously anti-republican, because for life; and the national arm wielded, as you observe, by military leaders, irresponsible but to themselves. Add to this the vicious constitution of our county courts (to whom the justice, the executive administration, the taxation, police, the military appointments of the county, and nearly all our daily concerns are confided), self-appointed, self-continued, holding their authorities for life, and with an impossibility of

breaking in on the perpetual succession of any faction once possessed of the bench. They are in truth, the executive, the judiciary, and the military of their respective counties, and the sum of the counties makes the State. And add, also, that one-half of our brethren who fight and pay taxes, are excluded, like Helots, from the rights of representation, as if society were instituted for the soil, and not for the men inhabiting it; or one-half of these could dispose of the rights and the will of the other half, without their consent.

"What constitutes a State?
Not high-raised battlements, or labor'd mound,
Thick wall, or moated gate;
Not cities proud, with spires and turrets crown'd;
No: men, high-minded men;
Men, who their duties know;
But know their rights; and knowing, dare maintain.
These constitute a State."

In the General Government, the House of Representatives is mainly republican; the Senate scarcely so at all, as not elected by the people directly, and so long secured even against those who do elect them; the Executive more republican than the Senate, from its shorter term, its election by the people, in *practice*, (for they vote for A only on an assurance that he will vote for B,) and because, *in practice also*, a principle of rotation seems to be in a course of establishment; the judiciary independent of the nation, their coercion by impeachment being found nugatory.

If, then, the control of the people over the organs of their government be the measure of its republicanism, and I confess I know no other measure, it must be agreed that our governments have much less of republicanism than ought to have been expected; in other words, that the people have less regular control over their agents, than their rights and their interests require. And this I ascribe, not to any want of republican dispositions in those who formed these Constitutions, but to a submission of true principle to European authorities, to speculators on government, whose fears of the people have been inspired by the populace of their own great cities, and were unjustly entertained against the independent, the happy, and therefore orderly citizens of the United States. Much I apprehend that the golden moment is past for reforming these heresies. The functionaries of public power rarely strengthen in their dispositions to abridge it, and an unorganized call for timely amendment is not likely to prevail against an organized opposition to it. We are always told that things are going on well; why change them? "*Chi sta bene, non si muove,*" said the Italian, "let him who stands well, stand still." This is true; and I verily believe they would go on well with us under an absolute monarch, while our present character remains, of order, industry and love of peace, and restrained, as he would be, by the proper spirit of the people. But it is while it remains such, we should provide against the consequences of its de-

terioration. And let us rest in the hope that it will yet be done, and spare ourselves the pain of evils which may never happen.

On this view of the import of the term *republic*, instead of saying, as has been said, "that it may mean anything or nothing," we may say with truth and meaning, that governments are more or less republican, as they have more or less of the element of popular election and control in their composition; and believing, as I do, that the mass of the citizens is the safest depository of their own rights and especially, that the evils flowing from the duperies of the people, are less injurious than those from the egoism of their agents, I am a friend to that composition of government which has in it the most of this ingredient. And I sincerely believe, with you, that banking establishments are more dangerous than standing armies; and that the principle of spending money to be paid by posterity, under the name of funding, is but swindling futurity on a large scale.

I salute you with constant friendship and respect.

TO FRANCIS W. GILMER.

MONTICELLO, June 7, 1816.

DEAR SIR,—I received a few days ago from Mr. Dupont the enclosed manuscript, with permission to read it, and a request, when read, to forward it to you, in expectation that you would translate it. It is well worthy of publication for the instruc-

tion of our citizens, being profound, sound, and short. Our legislators are not sufficiently apprised of the rightful limits of their power; that their true office is to declare and enforce only our natural rights and duties, and to take none of them from us. No man has a natural right to commit aggression on the equal rights of another; and this is all from which the laws ought to restrain him; every man is under the natural duty of contributing to the necessities of the society; and this is all the laws should enforce on him; and, no man having a natural right to be the judge between himself and another, it is his natural duty to submit to the umpirage of an impartial third. When the laws have declared and enforced all this, they have fulfilled their functions; and the idea is quite unfounded, that on entering into society we give up any natural right. The trial of every law by one of these texts, would lessen much the labors of our legislators, and lighten equally our municipal codes. There is a work of the first order of merit now in the press at Washington, by Destutt Tracy, on the subject of political economy, which he brings into the compass of three hundred pages, octavo. In a preliminary discourse on the origin of the right of property, he coincides much with the principles of the present manuscript; but is more developed, more demonstrative. He promises a future work on morals, in which I lament to see that he will adopt the principles of Hobbes, or humiliation to human nature; that the sense of

justice and injustice is not derived from our natural organization, but founded on convention only. I lament this the more, as he is unquestionably the ablest writer living, on abstract subjects. Assuming the fact, that the earth has been created in time, and consequently the dogma of final causes, we yield, of course, to this short syllogism. Man was created for social intercourse; but social intercourse cannot be maintained without a sense of justice; then man must have been created with a sense of justice. There is an error into which most of the speculators on government have fallen, and which the well-known state of society of our Indians ought, before now, to have corrected. In their hypothesis of the origin of government, they suppose it to have commenced in the patriarchal or monarchical form. Our Indians are evidently in that state of nature which has passed the association of a single family; and not yet submitted to the authority of positive laws, or of any acknowledged magistrate. Every man, with them, is perfectly free to follow his own inclinations. But if, in doing this, he violates the rights of another, if the case be slight, he is punished by the disesteem of his society, or, as we say, by public opinion; if serious, he is tomahawked as a dangerous enemy. Their leaders conduct them by the influence of their character only; and they follow, or not, as they please, him of whose character for wisdom or war they have the highest opinion. Hence the origin of the parties among them adhering to different

leaders, and governed by their advice, not by their command. The Cherokees, the only tribe I know to be contemplating the establishment of regular laws, magistrates, and government, propose a government of representatives, elected from every town. But of all things, they least think of subjecting themselves to the will of one man. This, the only instance of actual fact within our knowledge, will be then a beginning by republican, and not by patriarchal or monarchical government, as speculative writers have generally conjectured.

We have to join in mutual congratulations on the appointment of our friend Correa, to be minister or envoy of Portugal, here. This, I hope, will give him to us for life. Nor will it at all interfere with his botanical rambles or journeys. The government of Portugal is so peaceable and inoffensive, that it has never any altercations with its friends. If their minister abroad writes them once a quarter that all is well, they desire no more. I learn, (though not from Correa himself,) that he thinks of paying us a visit as soon as he is through his course of lectures. Not to lose this happiness again by my absence, I have informed him I shall set out for Poplar Forest the 20th instant, and be back the first week of July. I wish you and he could concert your movements so as to meet here, and that you would make this your headquarters. It is a good central point from which to visit your connections; and you know our practice of placing our guests at their

ease, by showing them we are so ourselves and that we follow our necessary vocations, instead of fatiguing them by hanging unremittingly on their shoulders. I salute you with affectionate esteem and respect.

TO WILLIAM H. CRAWFORD.

MONTICELLO, June 20, 1816.

DEAR SIR,—I am about to sin against all discretion, and knowingly, by adding to the drudgery of your letter-reading, this acknowledgment of the receipt of your favor of May the 31st, with the papers it covered. I cannot, however, deny myself the gratification of expressing the satisfaction I have received, not only from the general statement of affairs at Paris, in yours of December the 12th, 1814, (as a matter of history which I had not before received,) but most especially and superlatively, from the perusal of your letter of the 8th of the same month to Mr. Fisk, on the subject of draw-backs. This most heterogeneous principle was transplanted into ours from the British system, by a man whose mind was really powerful, but chained by native partialities to everything English; who had formed exaggerated ideas of the superior perfection of the English constitution, the superior wisdom of their government, and sincerely believed it for the good of this country to make them their model in everything; without considering that what might be wise

and good for a nation essentially commercial, and entangled in complicated intercourse with numerous and powerful neighbors, might not be so for one essentially agricultural, and insulated by nature from the abusive governments of the old world.

The exercise, by our own citizens, of so much commerce as may suffice to exchange our superfluities for our wants, may be advantageous for the whole. But it does not follow, that with a territory so boundless, it is the interest of the whole to become a mere city of London, to carry on the business of one-half the world at the expense of eternal war with the other half. The agricultural capacities of our country constitute its distinguishing feature; and the adapting our policy and pursuits to that, is more likely to make us a numerous and happy people, than the mimicry of an Amsterdam, a Hamburg, or a city of London. Every society has a right to fix the fundamental principles of its association, and to say to all individuals, that, if they contemplate pursuits beyond the limits of these principles, and involving dangers which the society chooses to avoid, they must go somewhere else for their exercise; that we want no citizens, and still less ephemeral and pseudo-citizens, on such terms. We may exclude them from our territory, as we do persons infected with disease. Such is the situation of our country. We have most abundant resources of happiness within ourselves, which we may enjoy in peace and safety, without permitting a few citizens,

infected with the mania of rambling and gambling, to bring danger on the great mass engaged in innocent and safe pursuits at home. In your letter to Fisk, you have fairly stated the alternatives between which we are to choose: 1, licentious commerce and gambling speculations for a few, with eternal war for the many; or, 2, restricted commerce, peace, and steady occupations for all. If any State in the Union will declare that it prefers separation with the first alternative, to a continuance in union without it, I have no hesitation in saying, "let us separate." I would rather the States should withdraw, which are for unlimited commerce and war, and confederate with those alone which are for peace and agriculture. I know that every nation in Europe would join in sincere amity with the latter, and hold the former at arm's length, by jealousies, prohibitions, restrictions, vexations and war. No earthly consideration could induce my consent to contract such a debt as England has by her wars for commerce, to reduce our citizens by taxes to such wretchedness, as that laboring sixteen of the twenty-four hours, they are still unable to afford themselves bread, or barely to earn as much oatmeal or potatoes as will keep soul and body together. And all this to feed the avidity of a few millionary merchants, and to keep up one thousand ships of war for the protection of their commercial speculations. I returned from Europe after our government had got under way, and had adopted from the British code the law of draw-backs. I

early saw its effects in the jealousies and vexations of Britain; and that, retaining it, we must become like her an essentially warring nation, and meet, in the end, the catastrophe impending over her. No one can doubt that this alone produced the orders of council, the depredations which preceded, and the war which followed them. Had we carried but our own produce, and brought back but our own wants, no nation would have troubled us. Our commercial dashers, then, have already cost us so many thousand lives, so many millions of dollars, more than their persons and all their commerce were worth. When war was declared, and especially after Massachusetts, who had produced it, took side with the enemy waging it, I pressed on some confidential friends in Congress to avail us of the happy opportunity of repealing the draw-back; and I do rejoice to find that you are in that sentiment. You are young, and may be in the way of bringing it into effect. Perhaps time, even yet, and change of tone, (for there are symptoms of that in Massachusetts,) may not have obliterated altogether the sense of our late feelings and sufferings; may not have induced oblivion of the friends we have lost, the depredations and conflagrations we have suffered, and the debts we have incurred, and have to labor for through the lives of the present generation. The earlier the repeal is proposed, the more it will be befriended by all these recollections and considerations. This is one of three great measures necessary to insure us

permanent prosperity. This preserves our peace. A second should enable us to meet any war, by adopting the report of the War Department, for placing the force of the nation at effectual command; and a third should insure resources of money by the suppression of all paper circulation during peace, and licensing that of the nation alone during war. The metallic medium of which we should be possessed at the commencement of a war, would be a sufficient fund for all the loans we should need through its continuance; and if the national bills issued be bottomed (as is indispensable) on pledges of specific taxes for their redemption within certain and moderate epochs, and be of proper denominations for circulation, no interest on them would be necessary or just, because they would answer to every one the purposes of the metallic money withdrawn and replaced by them.

But possibly these may be the dreams of an old man, or that the occasions of realizing them may have passed away without return. A government regulating itself by what is wise and just for the many, uninfluenced by the local and selfish views of the few who direct their affairs, has not been seen, perhaps, on earth. Or if it existed, for a moment, at the birth of ours, it would not be easy to fix the term of its continuance. Still, I believe it does exist here in a greater degree than anywhere else; and for its growth and continuance, as well as for your personal health and happiness, I offer sincere prayers, with the homage of my respect and esteem.

TO SAMUEL KERCHEVAL.

MONTICELLO, July 12, 1816.

SIR,—I duly received your favor of June the 13th, with the copy of the letters on the calling a convention, on which you are pleased to ask my opinion. I have not been in the habit of mysterious reserve on any subject, nor of buttoning up my opinions within my own doublet. On the contrary, while in public service especially, I thought the public entitled to frankness, and intimately to know whom they employed. But I am now retired: I resign myself, as a passenger, with confidence to those at present at the helm, and ask but for rest, peace and good will. The question you propose, on equal representation, has become a party one, in which I wish to take no public share. Yet, if it be asked for your own satisfaction only, and not to be quoted before the public, I have no motive to withhold it, and the less from you, as it coincides with your own. At the birth of our republic, I committed that opinion to the world, in the draught of a constitution annexed to the "Notes on Virginia," in which a provision was inserted for a representation permanently equal. The infancy of the subject at that moment, and our inexperience of self-government, occasioned gross departures in that draught from genuine republican canons. In truth, the abuses of monarchy had so much filled all the space of political contemplation, that we imagined everything republican which was

not monarchy. We had not yet penetrated to the mother principle, that "governments are republican only in proportion as they embody the will of their people, and execute it." Hence, our first constitutions had really no leading principles in them. But experience and reflection have but more and more confirmed me in the particular importance of the equal representation then proposed. On that point, then, I am entirely in sentiment with your letters; and only lament that a copyright of your pamphlet prevents their appearance in the newspapers, where alone they would be generally read, and produce general effect. The present vacancy too, of other matter, would give them place in every paper, and bring the question home to every man's conscience.

But inequality of representation in both Houses of our legislature, is not the only republican heresy in this first essay of our Revolutionary patriots at forming a Constitution. For let it be agreed that a government is republican in proportion as every member composing it has his equal voice in the direction of its concerns, (not indeed in person, which would be impracticable beyond the limits of a city, or small township,) but by representatives chosen by himself, and responsible to him at short periods, and let us bring to the test of this canon every branch of our Constitution.

In the legislature, the House of Representatives is chosen by less than half the people, and not at all in proportion to those who do choose. The Senate

are still more disproportionate, and for long terms of irresponsibility. In the Executive, the Governor is entirely independent of the choice of the people, and of their control; his Council equally so, and at best but a fifth wheel to a wagon. In the Judiciary, the judges of the highest courts are dependent on none but themselves. In England, where judges were named and removable at the will of an hereditary executive, from which branch most misrule was feared, and has flowed, it was a great point gained, by fixing them for life, to make them independent of that executive. But in a government founded on the public will, this principle operates in an opposite direction, and against that will. There, too, they were still removable on a concurrence of the executive and legislative branches. But we have made them independent of the nation itself. They are irremovable, but by their own body, for any depravities of conduct, and even by their own body for the imbecilities of dotage. The justices of the inferior courts are self-chosen, are for life, and perpetuate their own body in succession forever, so that a faction once possessing themselves of the bench of a county, can never be broken up, but hold their county in chains, forever indissoluble. Yet these justices are the real executive as well as judiciary, in all our minor and most ordinary concerns. They tax us at will; fill the office of sheriff, the most important of all the executive officers of the county; name nearly all our military leaders, which leaders, once named,

are removable but by themselves. The juries, our judges of all fact, and of law when they choose it, are not selected by the people, nor amenable to them. They are chosen by an officer named by the court and executive. Chosen, did I say? Picked up by the sheriff from the loungings of the court yard, after everything respectable has retired from it. Where then is our republicanism to be found? Not in our Constitution certainly, but merely in the spirit of our people. That would oblige even a despot to govern us republicanly. Owing to this spirit, and to nothing in the form of our Constitution, all things have gone well. But this fact, so triumphantly misquoted by the enemies of reformation, is not the fruit of our Constitution, but has prevailed in spite of it. Our functionaries have done well, because generally honest men. If any were not so, they feared to show it.

But it will be said, it is easier to find faults than to amend them. I do not think their amendment so difficult as is pretended. Only lay down true principles, and adhere to them inflexibly. Do not be frightened into their surrender by the alarms of the timid, or the croakings of wealth against the ascendency of the people. If experience be called for, appeal to that of our fifteen or twenty governments for forty years, and show me where the people have done half the mischief in these forty years, that a single despot would have done in a single year; or show half the riots and rebellions, the crimes and the

punishments, which have taken place in any single nation, under kingly government, during the same period. The true foundation of republican government is the equal right of every citizen, in his person and property, and in their management. Try by this, as a tally, every provision of our Constitution, and see if it hangs directly on the will of the people. Reduce your legislature to a convenient number for full, but orderly discussion. Let every man who fights or pays, exercise his just and equal right in their election. Submit them to approbation or rejection at short intervals. Let the executive be chosen in the same way, and for the same term, by those whose agent he is to be; and leave no screen of a council behind which to skulk from responsibility. It has been thought that the people are not competent electors of judges *learned in the law*. But I do not know that this is true, and, if doubtful, we should follow principle. In this, as in many other elections, they would be guided by reputation, which would not err oftener, perhaps, than the present mode of appointment. In one State of the Union, at least, it has long been tried, and with the most satisfactory success. The judges of Connecticut have been chosen by the people every six months, for nearly two centuries, and I believe there has hardly ever been an instance of change; so powerful is the curb of incessant responsibility. If prejudice, however, derived from a monarchical institution, is still to prevail against the vital elective principle of our own,

and if the existing example among ourselves of periodical election of judges by the people be still mistrusted, let us at least not adopt the evil, and reject the good, of the English precedent; let us retain amovability on the concurrence of the executive and legislative branches, and nomination by the executive alone. Nomination to office is an executive function. To give it to the legislature, as we do, is a violation of the principle of the separation of powers. It swerves the members from correctness, by temptations to intrigue for office themselves, and to a corrupt barter of votes; and destroys responsibility by dividing it among a multitude. By leaving nomination in its proper place, among executive functions, the principle of the distribution of power is preserved, and responsibility weighs with its heaviest force on a single head.

The organization of our county administrations may be thought more difficult. But follow principle, and the knot unties itself. Divide the counties into wards of such size as that every citizen can attend, when called on, and act in person. Ascribe to them the government of their wards in all things relating to themselves exclusively. A justice, chosen by themselves, in each, a constable, a military company, a patrol, a school, the care of their own poor, their own portion of the public roads, the choice of one or more jurors to serve in some court, and the delivery, within their own wards, of their own votes for all elective officers of higher sphere, will relieve

the county administration of nearly all its business, will have it better done, and by making every citizen an acting member of the government, and in the offices nearest and most interesting to him, will attach him by his strongest feelings to the independence of his country, and its republican Constitution. The justices thus chosen by every ward, would constitute the county court, would do its judiciary business, direct roads and bridges, levy county and poor rates, and administer all the matters of common interest to the whole country. These wards, called townships in New England, are the vital principle of their governments, and have proved themselves the wisest invention ever devised by the wit of man for the perfect exercise of self-government, and for its preservation. We should thus marshal our government into, 1, the general federal republic, for all concerns foreign and federal; 2, that of the State, for what relates to our own citizens exclusively; 3, the county republics, for the duties and concerns of the county; and 4, the ward republics, for the small, and yet numerous and interesting concerns of the neighborhood; and in government, as well as in every other business of life, it is by division and subdivision of duties alone, that all matters, great and small, can be managed to perfection. And the whole is cemented by giving to every citizen, personally, a part in the administration of the public affairs.

The sum of these amendments is, 1. General suffrage. 2. Equal representation in the legislature,

3. An executive chosen by the people. 4. Judges elective or amovable. 5. Justices, jurors, and sheriffs elective. 6. Ward divisions. And 7. Periodical amendments of the Constitution.

I have thrown out these as loose heads of amendment, for consideration and correction; and their object is to secure self-government by the republicanism of our Constitution, as well as by the spirit of the people; and to nourish and perpetuate that spirit. I am not among those who fear the people. They, and not the rich, are our dependence for continued freedom. And to preserve their independence, we must not let our rulers load us with perpetual debt. We must make our election between *economy and liberty*, or *profusion and servitude*. If we run into such debts, as that we must be taxed in our meat and in our drink, in our necessaries and our comforts, in our labors and our amusements, for our callings and our creeds, as the people of England are, our people, like them, must come to labor sixteen hours in the twenty-four, give the earnings of fifteen of these to the government for their debts and daily expenses; and the sixteenth being insufficient to afford us bread, we must live, as they now do, on oatmeal and potatoes; have no time to think, no means of calling the mismanagers to account; but be glad to obtain subsistence by hiring ourselves to rivet their chains on the necks of our fellow sufferers. Our land-holders, too, like theirs, retaining indeed the title and stewardship of estates called theirs, but held

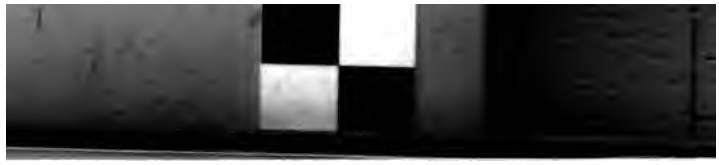
really in trust for the treasury, must wander, like theirs, in foreign countries, and be contented with penury, obscurity, exile, and the glory of the nation. This example reads to us the salutary lesson, that private fortunes are destroyed by public as well as by private extravagance. And this is the tendency of all human governments. A departure from principle in one instance becomes a precedent for a second; that second for a third; and so on, till the bulk of the society is reduced to be mere automatons of misery, to have no sensibilities left but for sinning and suffering. Then begins, indeed, the *bellum omnium in omnia*, which some philosophers observing to be so general in this world, have mistaken it for the natural, instead of the abusive state of man. And the fore horse of this frightful team is public debt. Taxation follows that, and in its train wretchedness and oppression.

Some men look at constitutions with sanctimonious reverence, and deem them like the ark of the covenant, too sacred to be touched. They ascribe to the men of the preceding age a wisdom more than human, and suppose what they did to be beyond amendment. I knew that age well; I belonged to it, and labored with it. It deserved well of its country. It was very like the present, but without the experience of the present; and forty years of experience in government is worth a century of book-reading; and this they would say themselves, were they to rise from the dead. I am certainly not an advocate for

frequent and untried changes in laws and constitutions. I think moderate imperfections had better be borne with; because, when once known, we accommodate ourselves to them, and find practical means of correcting their ill effects. But I know also, that laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind. As that becomes more developed, more enlightened, as new discoveries are made, new truths disclosed, and manners and opinions change with the change of circumstances, institutions must advance also, and keep pace with the times. We might as well require a man to wear still the coat which fitted him when a boy, as civilized society to remain ever under the regimen of their barbarous ancestors. It is this preposterous idea which has lately deluged Europe in blood. Their monarchs, instead of wisely yielding to the gradual change of circumstances, of favoring progressive accommodation to progressive improvement, have clung to old abuses, entrenched themselves behind steady habits, and obliged their subjects to seek through blood and violence rash and ruinous innovations, which, had they been referred to the peaceful deliberations and collected wisdom of the nation, would have been put into acceptable and salutary forms. Let us follow no such examples, nor weakly believe that one generation is not as capable as another of taking care of itself, and of ordering its own affairs. Let us, as our sister States have done, avail ourselves of our reason and experience,

to correct the crude essays of our first and unexperienced, although wise, virtuous, and well-meaning councils. And lastly, let us provide in our Constitution for its revision at stated periods. What these periods should be, nature herself indicates. By the European tables of mortality, of the adults living at any one moment of time, a majority will be dead in about nineteen years. At the end of that period then, a new majority is come into place; or, in other words, a new generation. Each generation is as independent of the one preceding, as that was of all which had gone before. It has then, like them, a right to choose for itself the form of government it believes most promotive of its own happiness; consequently, to accommodate to the circumstances in which it finds itself, that received from its predecessors; and it is for the peace and good of mankind, that a solemn opportunity of doing this every nineteen or twenty years, should be provided by the Constitution; so that it may be handed on, with periodical repairs, from generation to generation, to the end of time, if anything human can so long endure. It is now forty years since the constitution of Virginia was formed. The same tables inform us, that, within that period, two-thirds of the adults then living are now dead. Have then the remaining third, even if they had the wish, the right to hold in obedience to their will, and to laws heretofore made by them, the other two-thirds, who, with themselves, compose the present mass of adults? If they have not,

who has? The dead? But the dead have no rights. They are nothing; and nothing cannot own something. Where there is no substance, there can be no accident. This corporeal globe, and everything upon it, belong to its present corporeal inhabitants, during their generation. They alone have a right to direct what is the concern of themselves alone, and to declare the law of that direction; and this declaration can only be made by their majority. That majority, then, has a right to depute representatives to a convention, and to make the Constitution what they think will be the best for themselves. But how collect their voice? This is the real difficulty. If invited by private authority, or county or district meetings, these divisions are so large that few will attend; and their voice will be imperfectly, or falsely, pronounced. Here, then, would be one of the advantages of the ward divisions I have proposed. The mayor of every ward, on a question like the present, would call his ward together, take the simple yea or nay of its members, convey these to the county court, who would hand on those of all its wards to the proper general authority; and the voice of the whole people would be thus fairly, fully, and peaceably expressed, discussed, and decided by the common reason of the society. If this avenue be shut to the call of sufferance, it will make itself heard through that of force, and we shall go on, as other nations are doing, in the endless circle of oppression, rebellion, reformation; and oppression, rebellion, reformation, again; and so on forever.



These, Sir, are my opinions of the governments we see among men, and of the principles by which alone we may prevent our own from falling into the same dreadful track. I have given them at greater length than your letter called for. But I cannot say things by halves; and I confide them to your honor, so to use them as to preserve me from the gridiron of the public papers. If you shall approve and enforce them, as you have done that of equal representation, they may do some good. If not, keep them to yourself as the effusions of withered age and useless time. I shall, with not the less truth, assure you of my great respect and consideration.

TO JOHN TAYLOR.

MONTICELLO, July 16, 1816.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 10th is received, and I have to acknowledge a copious supply of the turnip seed requested. Besides taking care myself, I shall endeavor again to commit it to the depository of the neighborhood, generally found to be the best precaution against losing a good thing. I will add a word on the political part of our letters. I believe we do not differ on either of the points you suppose. On education certainly not; of which the proofs are my bill for the diffusion of knowledge, proposed near forty years ago, and my uniform endeavors, to this day, to get our counties divided into wards, one of the principal objects of which is, the establishment

of a primary school in each. But education not being a branch of municipal government, but, like the other arts and sciences, an accident only, I did not place it, with election, as a fundamental member in the structure of government. Nor, I believe, do we differ as to the county courts. I acknowledge the value of this institution; that it is in truth our principal executive and judiciary, and that it does much for little *pecuniary* reward. It is their self-appointment I wish to correct; to find some means of breaking up a cabal, when such a one gets possession of the bench. When this takes place, it becomes the most afflicting of tyrannies, because its powers are so various, and exercised on everything most immediately around us. And how many instances have you and I known of these monopolies of county administration? I knew a county in which a particular family (a numerous one) got possession of the bench, and for a whole generation never admitted a man on it who was not of its clan or connection. I know a county now of one thousand and five hundred militia, of which sixty are federalists. Its court is of thirty members, of whom twenty are federalists (every third man of the sect). There are large and populous districts in it without a justice, because without a federalist for appointment; the militia are as disproportionably under federal officers. And there is no authority on earth which can break up this junto, short of a general convention. The remaining one thousand four hundred

and forty, free, fighting, and paying citizens, are governed by men neither of their choice nor confidence, and without a hope of relief. They are certainly excluded from the blessings of a free government for life, and indefinitely, for aught the Constitution has provided. This solecism may be called anything but republican, and ought undoubtedly to be corrected. I salute you with constant friendship and respect.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY GOVERNOR PLUMER.[1]

MONTICELLO, July 21, 1816.

I thank you, Sir, for the copy you have been so good as to send me, of your late speech to the legislature of your State, which I have read a second time with great pleasure, as I had before done in the public papers. It is replete with sound principles, and truly republican. Some articles, too, are worthy of peculiar notice. The idea that institutions established for the use of the nation cannot be touched nor modified, even to make them answer their end, because of rights gratuitously supposed in those employed to manage them in trust for the public, may perhaps be a salutary provision against the abuses of a monarch, but is most absurd against the nation itself. Yet our lawyers and priests generally inculcate this doctrine, and suppose that preceding generations held the earth more freely than we do;

[1] William Plumer, Governor of New Hampshire.

had a right to impose laws on us, unalterable by ourselves, and that we, in like manner, can make laws and impose burdens on future generations, which they will have no right to alter; in fine, that the earth belongs to the dead and not the living. I remark also the phenomenon of a chief magistrate recommending the reduction of his own compensation. This is a solecism of which the wisdom of our late Congress canot be accused. I, however, place economy among the first and most important of republican virtues, and public debt as the greatest of the dangers to be feared. We see in England the consequences of the want of it, their laborers reduced to live on a penny in the shilling of their earnings, to give up bread, and resort to oatmeal and potatoes for food; and their landholders exiling themselves to live in penury and obscurity abroad, because at home the government must have all the clear profits of their land. In fact, they see the fee simple of the island transferred to the public creditors, all its profits going to them for the interest of their debts. Our laborers and landholders must come to this also, unless they severely adhere to the economy you recommend. I salute you with entire esteem and respect.

TO DOCTOR GEORGE LOGAN.

MONTICELLO, July 23, 1816.

DEAR SIR,—I have received and read with great pleasure the account you have been so kind as to send

me of the interview between the Emperor Alexander and Mr. Clarkson, which I now return, as it is in manuscript. It shows great condescension of character on the part of the Emperor, and power of mind also, to be able to abdicate the artificial distance between himself and other good, able men, and to converse as on equal ground. This conversation too, taken with his late Christian league, seems to bespeak in him something like a sectarian piety; his character is undoubtedly good, and the world, I think, may expect good effects from it. I have no doubt that his firmness in favor of France, after the deposition of Bonaparte, has saved that country from evils still more severe than she is suffering, and perhaps even from partition. I sincerely wish that the history of the secret proceedings at Vienna may become known, and may reconcile to our good opinion of him his participation in the demolition of ancient and independent States, transferring them and their inhabitants as farms and stocks of cattle at a market to other owners, and even taking a part of the spoil to himself. It is possible to suppose a case excusing this, and my partiality for his character encourages me to expect it, and to impute to others, known to have no moral scruples, the crimes of that conclave, who, under pretence of punishing the atrocities of Bonaparte, reached them themselves, and proved that with equal power they were equally flagitious. But let us turn with abhorrence from these sceptered Scelerats, and disregarding our own petty differences

of opinion about men and measures, let us cling in mass to our country and to one another, and bid defiance, as we can if united, to the plundering combinations of the old world. Present me affectionately and respectfully to Mrs. Logan, and accept the assurance of my friendship and best wishes.

TO JOSEPH DELAPLAINE.

MONTICELLO, July 26, 1816.

DEAR SIR,—In compliance with the request of your letter of the 6th inst., with respect to Peyton Randolph, I have to observe that the difference of age between him and myself admitted my knowing little of his early life, except what I accidentally caught from occasional conversations. I was a student at college when he was already Attorney General at the bar, and a man of established years; and I had no intimacy with him until I went to the bar myself, when, I suppose, he must have been upwards of forty; from that time, and especially after I became a member of the legislature, until his death, our intimacy was cordial, and I was with him when he died. Under these circumstances, I have committed to writing as many incidents of his life as memory enabled me to do, and to give faith to the many and excellent qualities he possessed, I have mentioned those minor ones which he did not possess; considering true history, in which all will be believed, as preferable to unqualified panegyric, in which nothing is believed. I avoided, too,

the mention of trivial incidents, which, by not distinguishing, disparage a character; but I have not been able to state early dates. Before forwarding this paper to you, I received a letter from Peyton Randolph, his great nephew, repeating the request you had made. I therefore put the paper under a blank cover, addressed to you, unsealed, and sent it to Peyton Randolph, that he might see what dates as well as what incidents might be collected, supplementary to mine, and correct any which I had inexactly stated; circumstances may have been misremembered, but nothing, I think, of substance. This account of Peyton Randolph, therefore, you may expect to be forwarded by his nephew.

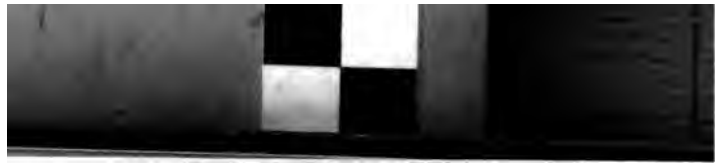
You requested me when here, to communicate to you the particulars of two transactions in which I was myself an agent, to wit: the *coup de main* of Arnold on Richmond, and Tarleton's on Charlottesville. I now enclose them, detailed with an exactness on which you may rely with an entire confidence. But, having an insuperable aversion to be drawn into controversy in the public papers, I must request not to be quoted either as to these or the account of Peyton Randolph. Accept the assurances of my esteem and respect.

TO SIR JOHN SINCLAIR.

MONTICELLO, July 31, 1816.

DEAR SIR,—Your favor of November 1st came but lately to my hand. It covered a prospectus of your code of health and longevity, a great and useful work, which I shall be happy to see brought to a conclusion. Like our good old Franklin, your labors and science go all to the utilities of human life.

I reciprocate congratulations with you sincerely on the restoration of peace between our two nations. And why should there have been war? for the party to which the blame is to be imputed, we appeal to the "Exposition of the causes and character of the war," a pamphlet which, we are told, has gone through some editions with you. If that does not justify us, then the blame is ours. But let all this be forgotten; and let both parties now count soberly the value of mutual friendship. I am satisfied both will find that no advantage either can derive from any act of injustice whatever, will be of equal value with those flowing from friendly intercourse. Both ought to wish for peace and cordial friendship; we, because you can do us more harm than any other nation; and you, because we can do you more good than any other. Our growth is now so well established by regular enumerations through a course of forty years, and the same grounds of continuance so likely to endure for a much longer period, that, speaking in round numbers, we may safely call ourselves twenty



millions in twenty years, and forty millions in forty years. Many of the statesmen now living saw the commencement of the first term, and many now living will see the end of the second. It is not then a mere concern of posterity; a third of those now in life will see that day. Of what importance then to you must such a nation be, whether as friends or foes. But is their friendship, dear Sir, to be obtained by the irritating policy of fomenting among us party discord, and a teasing opposition; by bribing traitors, whose sale of themselves proves they would sell their purchasers also, if their treacheries were worth a price? How much cheaper would it be, how much easier, more honorable, more magnanimous and secure, to gain the government itself, by a moral, a friendly, and respectful course of conduct, which is all they would ask for a cordial and faithful return. I know the difficulties arising from the irritation, the exasperation produced on both sides by the late war. It is great with you, as I judge from your newspapers; and greater with us, as I see myself. The reason lies in the different degrees in which the war has acted on us. To your people it has been a matter of distant history only, a mere war in the carnatic; with us it has reached the bosom of every man, woman and child. The maritime parts have felt it in the conflagration of their houses, and towns, and desolation of their farms; the borderers in the massacres and scalpings of their husbands, wives and children; and the middle parts in their personal labors and losses

in defence of both frontiers, and the revolting scenes they have there witnessed. It is not wonderful then, if their irritations are extreme. Yet time and prudence on the part of the two governments may get over these. Manifestations of cordiality between them, friendly and kind offices made visible to the people on both sides, will mollify their feelings, and second the wishes of their functionaries to cultivate peace, and promote mutual interest. That these dispositions have been strong on our part, in every administration from the first to the present one, that we would at any time have gone our full half-way to meet them, if a single step in advance had been taken by the other party, I can affirm of my own intimate knowledge of the fact. During the first year of my own administration, I thought I discovered in the conduct of Mr. Addington some marks of comity towards us, and a willingness to extend to us the decencies and duties observed towards other nations. My desire to catch at this, and to improve it for the benefit of my own country, induced me, in addition to the official declarations from the Secretary of State, to write with my own hand to Mr. King, then our Minister Plenipotentiary at London, in the following words: "I avail myself of this occasion to assure you of my perfect satisfaction with the manner in which you have conducted the several matters committed to you by us; and to express my hope that through your agency, we may be able to remove everything inauspicious to a cordial friendship

between this country, and the one in which you are stationed; a friendship dictated by too many considerations not to be felt by the wise and the dispassionate of both nations. It is, therefore, with the sincerest pleasure I have observed on the part of the British government various manifestations of a just and friendly disposition towards us; we wish to cultivate peace and friendship with all nations, believing that course most conducive to the welfare of our own; it is natural that these friendships should bear some proportion to the common interests of the parties. The interesting relations between Great Britain and the United States are certainly of the first order, and as such are estimated, and will be faithfully cultivated by us. These sentiments have been communicated to you from time to time, in the official correspondence of the Secretary of State; but I have thought it might not be unacceptable to be assured that they perfectly concur with my own personal convictions, both in relation to yourself, and the country in which you are."

My expectation was that Mr. King would show this letter to Mr. Addington, and that it would be received by him as an overture towards a cordial understanding between the two countries. He left the ministry, however, and I never heard more of it, and certainly never perceived any good effect from it. I know that in the present temper, the boastful, the insolent, and the mendacious newspapers on both sides, will present serious impediments. Ours will

be insulting your public authorities, and boasting of victories; and yours will not be sparing of provocations and abuses of us. But if those at our helms could not place themselves above these pitiful notices, and throwing aside all personal feelings, look only to the interests of their nations, they would be unequal to the trusts confided to them. I am equally confident, on our part, in the administration now in place, as in that which will succeed it; and that if friendship is not hereafter sincerely cultivated, it will not be their fault. I will not, however, disguise that the settlement of the practice of impressing *our citizens* is a *sine qua non*, a preliminary, without which treaties of peace are but truces. But it is impossible that reasonable dispositions on both parts should not remove this stumbling-block, which unremoved, will be an eternal obstacle to peace, and lead finally to the deletion of the one or the other nation. The regulations necessary to keep your own seamen to yourselves are those which our interests would lead us to adopt, and that interest would be a guarantee of their observance; and the transfer of these questions from the cognizance of their naval commanders to the governments themselves, would be but an act of mutual as well as of self-respect.

I did not mean, when I began my letter, to have indulged my pen so far on subjects with which I have long ceased to have connection; but it may do good, and I will let it go, for although what I write is from no personal privity with the views or wishes of our

government, yet believing them to be what they ought to be, and confident in their wisdom and integrity, I am sure I hazard no deception in what I have said of them, and I shall be happy indeed if some good shall result to both our countries, from this renewal of our correspondence and ancient friendship. I recall with great pleasure the days of our former intercourse, personal and epistolary, and can assure you with truth that in no instant of time has there been any abatement of my great esteem and respect for you.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

MONTICELLO, August 1, 1816.

DEAR SIR,—Your two philosophical letters of May 4th and 6th have been too long in my carton of "letters to be answered." To the question, indeed, on the utility of grief, no answer remains to be given. You have exhausted the subject. I see that, with the other evils of life, it is destined to temper the cup we are to drink.

> Two urns by Jove's high throne have ever stood,
> The source of evil one, and one of good;
> From thence the cup of mortal man he fills,
> Blessings to these, to those distributes ills;
> To most he mingles both.

Putting to myself your question, would I agree to live my seventy-three years over again forever? I hesitate to say. With Chew's limitations from twenty-five to sixty, I would say yes; and I might

go further back, but not come lower down. For, at the latter period, with most of us, the powers of life are sensibly on the wane, sight becomes dim, hearing dull, memory constantly enlarging its frightful blank and parting with all we have ever seen or known, spirits evaporate, bodily debility creeps on palsying every limb, and so faculty after faculty quits us, and where then is life? If, in its full vigor, of good as well as evil, your friend Vassall could doubt its value, it must be purely a negative quantity when its evils alone remain. Yet I do not go into his opinion entirely. I do not agree that an age of pleasure is no compensation for a moment of pain. I think, with you, that life is a fair matter of account, and the balance often, nay generally, in its favor. It is not indeed easy, by calculation of intensity and time, to apply a common measure, or to fix the par between pleasure and pain; yet it exists, and is measurable. On the question, for example, whether to be cut for the stone? The young, with a longer prospect of years, think these overbalance the pain of the operation. Dr. Franklin, at the age of eighty, thought his residuum of life not worth that price. I should have thought with him, even taking the stone out of the scale. There is a ripeness of time for death, regarding others as well as ourselves, when it is reasonable we should drop off, and make room for another growth. When we have lived our generation out, we should not wish to encroach on another. I enjoy good health; I am happy in what is around me, yet I

assure you I am ripe for leaving all, this year, this day, this hour. If it could be doubted whether we would go back to twenty-five, how can it be whether we would go forward from seventy-three? Bodily decay is gloomy in prospect, but of all human contemplations the most abhorrent is body without mind. Perhaps, however, I might accept of time to read Grimm before I go. Fifteen volumes of anecdotes and incidents, within the compass of my own time and cognizance, written by a man of genius, of taste, of point, an acquaintance, the measure and traverses of whose mind I know, could not fail to turn the scale in favor of life during their perusal. I must write to Ticknor to add it to my catalogue, and hold on till it comes. There is a Mr. Van der Kemp of New York, a correspondent, I believe, of yours, with whom I have exchanged some letters without knowing who he is. Will you tell me? I know nothing of the history of the Jesuits you mention in four volumes. Is it a good one? I dislike, with you, their restoration, because it marks a retrograde step from light towards darkness. We shall have our follies without doubt. Some one or more of them will always be afloat. But ours will be the follies of enthusiasm, not of bigotry, not of Jesuitism. Bigotry is the disease of ignorance, of morbid minds; enthusiasm of the free and buoyant. Education and free discussion are the antidotes of both. We are destined to be a barrier against the returns of ignorance and barbarism. Old Europe will have to lean on our shoulders, and to hobble

along by our side, under the monkish trammels of priests and kings, as she can. What a colossus shall we be when the southern continent comes up to our mark! What a stand will it secure as a ralliance for the reason and freedom of the globe! I like the dreams of the future better than the history of the past,—so good night! I will dream on, always fancying that Mrs. Adams and yourself are by my side marking the progress and the obliquities of ages and countries.

TO MRS. M. HARRISON SMITH.

MONTICELLO, August 6, 1816.

I have received, dear Madam, your very friendly letter of July 21st, and assure you that I feel with deep sensibility its kind expressions towards myself, and the more as from a person than whom no others could be more in sympathy with my own affections. I often call to mind the occasions of knowing your worth, which the societies of Washington furnished; and none more than those derived from your much valued visit to Monticello. I recognize the same motives of goodness in the solicitude you express on the rumor supposed to proceed from a letter of mine to Charles Thomson, on the subject of the Christian religion. It is true that, in writing to the translator of the Bible and Testament, that subject was mentioned; but equally so that no adherence to any particular mode of Christianity was there ex-

pressed, nor any change of opinions suggested. A change from what? the priests indeed have heretofore thought proper to ascribe to me religious, or rather anti-religious sentiments, of their own fabric, but such as soothed their resentments against the act of Virginia for establishing religious freedom. They wished him to be thought atheist, deist, or devil, who could advocate freedom from their religious dictations. But I have ever thought religion a concern purely between our God and our consciences, for which we were accountable to Him, and not to the priests. I never told my own religion, nor scrutinized that of another. I never attempted to make a convert, nor wished to change another's creed. I have ever judged of the religion of others by their lives, and by this test, my dear Madam, I have been satisfied yours must be an excellent one, to have produced a life of such exemplary virtue and correctness. For it is in our lives, and not from our words, that our religion must be read. By the same test the world must judge me. But this does not satisfy the priesthood. They must have a positive, a declared assent to all their interested absurdities. My opinion is that there would never have been an infidel, if there had never been a priest. The artificial structures they have built on the purest of all moral systems, for the purpose of deriving from it pence and power, revolt those who think for themselves, and who read in that system only what is really there. These, therefore, they brand with such nick-names

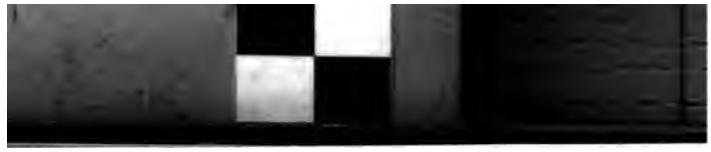
as their enmity chooses gratuitously to impute. I have left the world, in silence, to judge of causes from their effects; and I am consoled in this course, my dear friend, when I perceive the candor with which I am judged by your justice and discernment; and that, notwithstanding the slanders of the saints, my fellow citizens have thought me worthy of trusts. The imputations of irreligion having spent their force, they think an imputation of change might now be turned to account as a bolster for their duperies. I shall leave them, as heretofore, to grope on in the dark.

Our family at Monticello is all in good health; Ellen speaking of you with affection, and Mrs. Randolph always regretting the accident which so far deprived her of the happiness of your former visit. She still cherishes the hope of some future renewal of that kindness; in which we all join her, as in the assurances of affectionate attachment and respect.

JOHN ADAMS TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

QUINCY, August 9, 1816.

DEAR SIR,—The biography of Mr. Van der Kemp would require a volume which I could not write if a million were offered me as a reward for the work. After a learned and scientific education he entered the army in Holland, and served as captain, with reputation; but loving books more than arms, he resigned his commission and became a preacher.



My acquaintance with him commenced at Leyden in 1790. He was then minister of the Menonist congregation, the richest in Europe; in that city, where he was celebrated as the most elegant writer in the Dutch language, he was the intimate friend of Luzac and De Gysecaar. In 1788, when the King of Prussia threatened Holland with invasion, his party insisted on his taking a command in the army of defence, and he was appointed to the command of the most exposed and most important post in the seven provinces. He was soon surrounded by the Prussian forces; but he defended his fortress with a prudence, fortitude, patience, and perseverance, which were admired by all Europe; till, abandoned by his nation, destitute of provisions and ammunition, still refusing to surrender, he was offered the most honorable capitulation. He accepted it; was offered very advantageous proposals; but despairing of the liberties of his country, he retired to Antwerp, determined to emigrate to New York; wrote to me in London, requesting letters of introduction. I sent him letters to Governor Clinton, and several others of our little great men. His history in this country is equally curious and affecting. He left property in Holland, which the revolutions there have annihilated; and I fear is now pinched with poverty. His head is deeply learned and his heart is pure. I scarcely know a more amiable character.

* * * * * * * * *

He has written to me occasionally, and I have

answered his letters in great haste. You may well suppose that such a man has not always been able to understand our American politics. Nor have I. Had he been as great a master of our language as he was of his own, he would have been at this day one of the most conspicuous characters in the United States.

So much for Van der Kemp; now for your letter of August 1st. Your poet, the Ionian I suppose, ought to have told us whether Jove, in the distribution of good and evil from his two urns, observes any rule of equity or not; whether he thunders out flames of eternal fire on the many, and power, and glory, and felicity on the few, without any consideration of justice?

Let us state a few questions *sub rosa*.

1. Would you accept a life, if offered you, of equal pleasure and pain? For example. One million of moments of pleasure, and one million of moments of pain! (1,000,000 moments of pleasure=1,000,000 moments of pain.) Suppose the pleasure as exquisite as any in life, and the pain as exquisite as any; for example, stone-gravel, gout, headache, earache, toothache, colic, etc. I would not. I would rather be blotted out.

2. Would you accept a life of one year of incessant gout, headache, etc., for seventy-two years of such life as you have enjoyed? I would not. (One year of colic=seventy-two of *Boules de Savon;* pretty, but unsubstantial.) I had rather be extinguished.

You may vary these algebraical equations at pleasure and without end. All this ratiocination, calculation, call it what you will, is founded on the supposition of no future state. Promise me eternal life free from pain, although in all other respects no better than our present terrestrial existence, I know not how many thousand years of Smithfield fevers I would not endure to obtain it. In fine, without the supposition of a future state, mankind and this globe appear to me the most sublime and beautiful bubble, and bauble, that imagination can conceive.

Let us then wish for immortality at all hazards, and trust the Ruler with His skies. I do; and earnestly wish for His commands, which to the utmost of my power shall be implicitly and piously obeyed.

It is worth while to live to read Grimm, whom I have read; and La Harpe and Mademoiselle D'Espinasse the fair friend of D'Alembert, both of whom Grimm characterizes very distinguished, and are, I am told, in print. I have not seen them, but hope soon to have them.

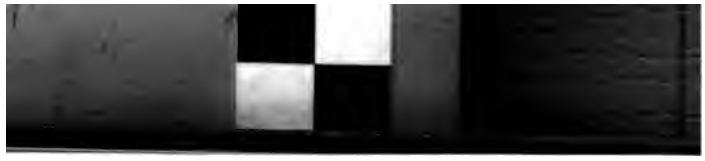
My history of the Jesuits is not elegantly written, but is supported by unquestionable authorities, is very particular and very horrible. Their restoration is indeed a "step towards darkness," cruelty, perfidy, despotism, death and—! I wish we were out of "danger of bigotry and Jesuitism"! May we be "a barrier against the returns of ignorance and barbarism"! "What a colossus shall we be"! But will it not be of brass, iron and clay? Your taste is

judicious in liking better the dreams of the future, than the history of the past. Upon this principle I prophesy that you and I shall soon meet, and be better friends than ever. So wishes, J. A.

TO ISAAC H. TIFFANY.

MONTICELLO, August 26, 1816.

SIR,—In answer to your inquiry as to the merits of Gillies' translation of the Politics of Aristotle, I can only say that it has the reputation of being preferable to Ellis', the only rival translation into English. I have never seen it myself, and therefore do not speak of it from my own knowledge. But so different was the style of society then, and with those people, from what it is now and with us, that I think little edification can be obtained from their writings on the subject of government. They had just ideas of the value of personal liberty, but none at all of the structure of government best calculated to preserve it. They knew no medium between a democracy (the only pure republic, but impracticable beyond the limits of a town) and an abandonment of themselves to an aristocracy, or a tyranny independent of the people. It seems not to have occurred that where the citizens cannot meet to transact their business in person, they alone have the right to choose the agents who shall transact it; and that in this way a republican, or popular government, of the second grade of purity, may be exercised over any extent of country. The



full experiment of a government democratical, but representative, was and is still reserved for us. The idea (taken, indeed, from the little specimen formerly existing in the English constitution, but now lost) has been carried by us, more or less, into all our legislative and executive departments; but it has not yet, by any of us, been pushed into all the ramifications of the system, so far as to leave no authority existing not responsible to the people; whose rights, however, to the exercise and fruits of their own industry, can never be protected against the selfishness of rulers not subject to their control at short periods. The introduction of this new principle of representative democracy has rendered useless almost everything written before on the structure of government; and, in a great measure, relieves our regret, if the political writings of Aristotle, or of any other ancient, have been lost, or are unfaithfully rendered or explained to us. My most earnest wish is to see the republican element of popular control pushed to the maximum of its practicable exercise. I shall then believe that our government may be pure and perpetual. Accept my respectful salutations.

JOHN ADAMS TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

QUINCY, September 3, 1816.

DEAR SIR,—Dr. James Freeman is a learned, ingenious, honest and benevolent man, who wishes to see President Jefferson, and requests me to introduce

him. If you would introduce some of your friends to me, I could, with more confidence, introduce mine to you. He is a Christian, but not a Pythagorian, a Platonic, or a Philonic Christian. You will ken him, and he will ken you; but you may depend he will never betray, deceive, or injure you.

Without hinting to him anything which had passed between you and me, I asked him your question, "*What are the uses of grief?*" He stared, and said "The question was new to him." All he could say at present was, that he had known, in his own parish, more than one instance of ladies who had been thoughtless, modish, extravagant in a high degree, who, upon the death of a child, had become thoughtful, modest, humble; as prudent, amiable women as any he had known. Upon this I read to him your letters and mine upon this subject of grief, with which he seemed to be pleased. You see I was not afraid to trust him, and you need not be.

Since I am, accidentally, invited to write to you, I may add a few words upon pleasures and pains of life. Vassall thought, an hundred years, nay, an eternity of pleasure, was no compensation for one hour of bilious colic. Read again Molière's Psyché, act 2d, scene 1st, on the subject of grief. And read in another place, "*on est payé de mille maux, par un heureux moment.*" Thus differently do men speak of pleasures and pains. Now, Sir, I will tease you with another question. What have been the *abuses* of grief?

In answer to this question, I doubt not you might write an hundred volumes. A few hints may convince you that the subject is ample.

1st. The death of Socrates excited a general sensibility of grief at Athens, in Attica, and in all Greece. Plato and Xenophon, two of his disciples, took advantage of that sentiment, by employing their enchanting style to represent their master to be greater and better than he probably was; and what have been the effects of Socratic, Platonic, which were Pythagorian, which was Indian philosophy, in the world?

2d. The death of Cæsar, tyrant as he was, spread a general compassion, which always includes grief, among the Romans. The scoundrel Mark Antony availed himself of this momentary grief to destroy the republic, to establish the empire, and to proscribe Cicero.

3d. But to skip over all ages and nations for the present, and descend to our own times. The death of Washington diffused a general grief. The old tories, the hyperfederalists, the speculators, set up a general howl. Orations, prayers, sermons, mock funerals, were all employed, not that they loved Washington, but to keep in countenance the funding and banking system; and to cast into the background and the shade, all others who had been concerned in the service of their country in the Revolution.

4th. The death of Hamilton, under all its circumstances, produced a general grief. His most determined enemies did not like to get rid of him in that

way. They pitied, too, his widow and children. His party seized the moment of public feeling to come forward with funeral orations, and printed panegyrics, reinforced with mock funerals and solemn grimaces, and all this by people who have buried Otis, Sam Adams, Hancock, and Gerry, in comparative obscurity. And why? Merely to disgrace the old Whigs, and keep the funds and banks in countenance.

5th. The death of Mr. Ames excited a general regret. His long consumption, his amiable character, and reputable talents, had attracted a general interest, and his death a general mourning. His party made the most of it, by processions, orations, and a mock funeral. And why? To glorify the Tories, to abash the Whigs, and maintain the reputation of funds, banks, and speculation. And all this was done in honor of that insignificant boy, by people who have let a Dance, a Gerry, and a Dexter, go to their graves without notice.

6th. I almost shudder at the thought of alluding to the most fatal example of the abuses of grief which the history of mankind has preserved—the Cross. Consider what calamities that engine of grief has produced! With the rational respect which is due to it, knavish priests have added prostitutions of it, that fill, or might fill, the blackest and bloodiest pages of human history.

I am with ancient friendly sentiments.

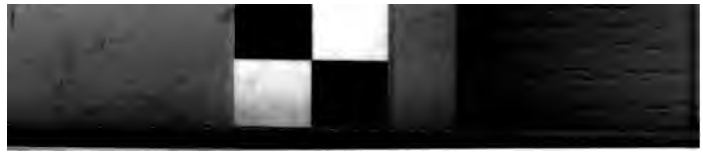
TO SAMUEL KERCHEVAL.

MONTICELLO, September 5, 1816.

SIR,—Your letter of August the 16th is just received. That which I wrote to you under the address of H. Tompkinson, was intended for the author of the pamphlet you were so kind as to send me, and therefore, in your hands, found its true destination. But I must beseech you, Sir, not to admit a possibility of its being published. Many good people will revolt from its doctrines, and my wish is to offend nobody; to leave to those who are to live under it, the settlement of their own constitution, and to pass in peace the remainder of my time. If those opinions are sound, they will occur to others, and will prevail by their own weight, without the aid of names. I am glad to see that the Staunton meeting has rejected the idea of a limited convention. The article, however, nearest my heart, is the division of counties into wards. These will be pure and elementary republics, the sum of all which, taken together, composes the State, and will make of the whole a true democracy as to the business of the wards, which is that of nearest and daily concern. The affairs of the larger sections, of counties, of States, and of the Union, not admitting personal transactions by the people, will be delegated to agents elected by themselves; and representation will thus be substituted, where personal action becomes impracticable. Yet, even over these representative organs, should they become

corrupt and perverted, the division into wards constituting the people, in their wards, a regularly organized power, enables them by that organization to crush, regularly and peaceably, the usurpations of their unfaithful agents, and rescues them from the dreadful necessity of doing it insurrectionally. In this way we shall be as republican as a large society can be; and secure the continuance of purity in our government, by the salutary, peaceable, and regular control of the people. No other depositories of power have ever yet been found, which did not end in converting to their own profit the earnings of those committed to their charge. George the III. in execution of the trust confided to him, has, within his own day, loaded the inhabitants of Great Britain with debts equal to the whole fee-simple value of their island, and under pretext of governing it, has alienated its whole soil to creditors who could lend money to be lavished on priests, pensions, plunder and perpetual war. This would not have been so, had the people retained organized means of acting on their agents. In this example then, let us read a lesson for ourselves, and not "go and do likewise."

Since writing my letter of July the 12th, I have been told, that on the question of equal representation, our fellow citizens in some sections of the State claim peremptorily a right of representation for their slaves. Principle will, in this, as in most other cases, open the way for us to correct conclusion. Were our State a pure democracy, in which all its inhabitants



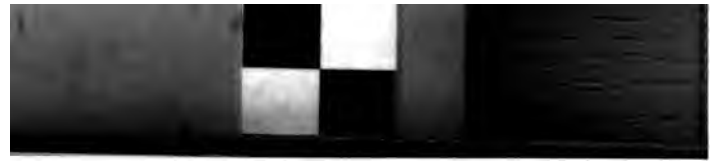
should meet together to transact all their business, there would yet be excluded from their deliberations, 1, infants, until arrived at years of discretion. 2. Women, who, to prevent depravation of morals and ambiguity of issue, could not mix promiscuously in the public meetings of men. 3. Slaves, from whom the unfortunate state of things with us takes away the rights of will and of property. Those then who have no will could be permitted to exercise none in the popular assembly; and of course, could delegate none to an agent in a representative assembly. The business, in the first case, would be done by qualified citizens only. It is true, that in the general Constitution, our State is allowed a larger representation on account of its slaves. But every one knows, that that Constitution was a matter of compromise; a capitulation between conflicting interests and opinions. In truth, the condition of different descriptions of inhabitants in any country is a matter of municipal arrangement, of which no foreign country has a right to take notice. All its inhabitants are men as to them. Thus, in the New England States, have the powers of citizens but those whom they call *freemen;* and none are *freemen* until admitted by a vote of the freemen of the town. Yet, in the General Government, these non-freemen are counted in their quantum of representation and of taxation. So, slaves with us have no powers as citizens; yet, in representation in the General Government, they count in the proportion of three to five; and so also

in taxation. Whether this is equal, is not here the question. It is a capitulation of discordant sentiments and circumstances, and is obligatory on that ground. But this view shows there is no inconsistency in claiming representation for them for the other States, and refusing it within our own. Accept the renewal of assurances of my respect.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

MONTICELLO, October 14, 1816.

Your letter, dear Sir, of May the 6th, had already well explained the uses of grief. That of September the 3d, with equal truth, adduces instances of its abuse; and when we put into the same scale these abuses, with the afflictions of soul which even the uses of grief cost us, we may consider its value in the economy of the human being, as equivocal at least. Those afflictions cloud too great a portion of life to find a counterpoise in any benefits derived from its use. For setting aside its paroxysms on the occasions of special bereavements, all the latter years of aged men are overshadowed with its gloom. Whither, for instance, can you and I look without seeing the graves of those we have known? And whom can we call up, of our early companions, who has not left us to regret his loss? This, indeed, may be one of the salutary effects of grief; inasmuch as it prepares us to loose ourselves also without repugnance. Doctor Freeman's instances of female levity cured by grief,



are certainly to the point, and constitute an item of credit in the account we examine. I was much mortified by the loss of the Doctor's visit, by my absence from home. To have shown how much I feel indebted to you for making good people known to me, would have been one pleasure; and to have enjoyed that of his conversation, and the benefits of his information, so favorably reported by my family, would have been another. I returned home on the third day after his departure. The loss of such visits is among the sacrifices which my divided residence costs me.

Your undertaking the twelve volumes of Dupuis, is a degree of heroism to which I could not have aspired even in my younger days. I have been contented with the humble achievement of reading the analysis of his work by Destutt Tracy, in two hundred pages octavo. I believe I should have ventured on his own abridgment of the work, in one octavo volume, had it ever come to my hands; but the marrow of it in Tracy has satisfied my appetite; and even in that, the preliminary discourse of the analyzer himself, and his conclusion, are worth more in my eye than the body of the work. For the object of that seems to be to smother all history under the mantle of allegory. If histories so unlike as those of Hercules and Jesus, can, by a fertile imagination and allegorical interpretations, be brought to the same tally, no line of distinction remains between fact and fancy. As this pithy morsel will not over-

burden the mail in passing and repassing between Quincy and Monticello, I send it for your perusal. Perhaps it will satisfy you, as it has me; and may save you the labor of reading twenty-four times its volume. I have said to you that it was written by Tracy; and I had so entered it on the title page, as I usually do on anonymous works whose authors are known to me. But Tracy requested me not to betray his anonyme, for reasons which may not yet, perhaps, have ceased to weigh. I am bound, then, to make the same reserve with you. Destutt Tracy is, in my judgment, the ablest writer living on intellectual subjects, or the operations of the understanding. His three octavo volumes on Ideology, which constitute the foundation of what he has since written, I have not entirely read; because I am not fond of reading what is merely abstract, and unapplied immediately to some useful science. Bonaparte, with his repeated derisions of Ideologists (squinting at this author), has by this time felt that true wisdom does not lie in mere practice without principle. The next work Tracy wrote was the Commentary on Montesquieu, never published in the original, because not safe; but translated and published in Philadelphia, yet without the author's name. He has since permitted his name to be mentioned. Although called a Commentary, it is, in truth, an elementary work on the principles of government, comprised in about three hundred pages octavo. He has lately published a third work, on

Political Economy, comprising the whole subject within about the same compass; in which all its principles are demonstrated with the severity of Euclid, and, like him, without ever using a superfluous word. I have procured this to be translated, and have been four years endeavoring to get it printed; but as yet, without success. In the meantime, the author has published the original in France, which he thought unsafe while Bonaparte was in power. No printed copy, I believe, has yet reached this country. He has his fourth and last work now in the press at Paris, closing, as he conceives, the circle of metaphysical sciences. This work, which is on Ethics, I have not seen, but suspect I shall differ from it in its foundation, although not in its deductions. I gather from his other works that he adopts the principle of Hobbes, that justice is founded in contract solely, and does not result from the construction of man. I believe, on the contrary, that it is instinct and innate, that the moral sense is as much a part of our constitution as that of feeling, seeing, or hearing; as a wise creator must have seen to be necessary in an animal destined to live in society; that every human mind feels pleasure in doing good to another; that the non-existence of justice is not to be inferred from the fact that the same act is deemed virtuous and right in one society which is held vicious and wrong in another; because, as the circumstances and opinions of different societies vary, so the acts which may do them right or wrong

must vary also; for virtue does not consist in the act we do, but in the end it is to effect. If it is to effect the happiness of him to whom it is directed, it is virtuous, while in a society under different circumstances and opinions, the same act might produce pain, and would be vicious. The essence of virtue is in doing good to others, while what is good may be one thing in one society, and its contrary in another. Yet, however we may differ as to the foundation of morals, (and as many foundations have been assumed as there are writers on the subject nearly,) so correct a thinker as Tracy will give us a sound system of morals. And, indeed, it is remarkable, that so many writers, setting out from so many different premises, yet meet all in the same conclusions. This looks as if they were guided, unconsciously, by the unerring hand of instinct.

Your history of the Jesuits, by what name of the author or other description is it to be inquired for?

What do you think of the present situation of England? Is not this the great and fatal crush of their funding system, which, like death, has been foreseen by all, but its hour, like that of death, hidden from mortal prescience? It appears to me that all the circumstances now exist which render recovery desperate. The interest of the national debt is now equal to such a portion of the profits of all the land and the labor of the island, as not to leave enough for the subsistence of those who labor. Hence the owners of the land abandon it and retire to other

countries, and the laborer has not enough of his earnings left to him to cover his back and to fill his belly. The local insurrections, now almost general, are of the hungry and the naked, who cannot be quieted but by food and raiment. But where are the means of feeding and clothing them? The landholder has nothing of his own to give; he is but the fiduciary of those who have lent him money; the lender is so taxed in his meat, drink and clothing, that he has but a bare subsistence left. The landholder, then, must give up his land, or the lender his debt, or they must compromise by giving up each one-half. But will either consent, *peaceably*, to such an abandonment of property? Or must it not be settled by civil conflict? If peaceably compromised, will they agree to risk another ruin under the same government unreformed? I think not; but I would rather know what you think; because you have lived with John Bull, and know better than I do the character of his herd. I salute Mrs. Adams and yourself with every sentiment of affectionate cordiality and respect.

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE (JAMES MONROE).

MONTICELLO, October 16, 1816.

DEAR SIR,—If it be proposed to place an inscription on the capitol, the lapidary style requires that essential facts only should be stated, and these with

a brevity admitting no superfluous word. The essential facts in the two inscriptions proposed are these:

FOUNDED 1791.—BURNT BY A BRITISH ARMY 1814.—RESTORED BY CONGRESS 1817.

The reasons for this brevity are that the letters must be of extraordinary magnitude to be read from below; that little space is allowed them, being usually put into a pediment or in a frieze, or on a small tablet on the wall; and in our case, a third reason may be added, that no passion can be imputed to this inscription, every word being justifiable from the most classical examples.

But a question of more importance is whether there should be one at all? The barbarism of the conflagration will immortalize that of the nation. It will place them forever in degraded comparison with the execrated Bonaparte, who, in possession of almost every capitol in Europe, injured no one. Of this, history will take care, which all will read, while our inscription will be seen by few. Great Britain, in her pride and ascendency, has certainly hated and despised us beyond every earthly object. Her hatred may remain, but the hour of her contempt is passed and is succeeded by dread; not at present, but a distant and deep one. It is the greater as she feels herself plunged into an abyss of ruin from which no human means point out an issue. We also have more reason to hate her than any nation on earth. But she is not now an object for hatred. She is fall-

ing from her transcendant sphere, which all men ought to have wished, but not that she should lose all place among nations. It is for the interest of all that she should be maintained, *nearly* on a par with other members of the republic of nations. Her power, absorbed into that of any other, would be an object of dread to all, and to us more than all, because we are accessible to her alone and through her alone. The armies of Bonaparte with the fleets of Britain, would change the aspect of our destinies. Under these prospects should we perpetuate hatred against her? Should we not, on the contrary, begin to open ourselves to other and more rational dispositions? It is not improbable that the circumstances of the war and her own circumstances may have brought her wise men to begin to view us with other and even with kindred eyes. Should not our wise men, then, lifted above the passions of the ordinary citizen, begin to contemplate what *will be* the interests of our country on so important a change among the elements which influence it? I think it would be better to give her time to show her present temper, and to prepare the minds of our citizens for a corresponding change of disposition, by acts of comity towards England rather than by commemoration of hatred. These views might be greatly extended. Perhaps, however, they are premature, and that I may see the ruin of England nearer than it really is. This will be matter of consideration with those to whose councils we have committed ourselves, and whose wisdom, I

am sure, will conclude on what is best. Perhaps they may let it go off on the single and short consideration that the thing can do no good, and may do harm. Ever and affectionately yours.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

POPLAR FOREST, November 25, 1816

I receive here, dear Sir, your favor of the 4th, just as I am preparing my return to Monticello for winter quarters, and I hasten to answer to some of your inquiries. The Tracy I mentioned to you is the one connected by marriage with Lafayette's family. The mail which brought your letter, brought one also from him. He writes me that he is become blind, and so infirm that he is no longer able to compose anything. So that we are to consider his works as now closed. They are three volumes of Ideology, one on Political Economy, one on Ethics, and one containing his Commentary on Montesquieu, and a little tract on Education. Although his commentary explains his principles of government, he had intended to have substituted for it an elementary and regular treatise on the subject, but he is prevented by his infirmities. His Analyse de Dupuys he does not avow.

My books are all arrived, some at New York, some at Boston, and I am glad to hear that those of Harvard are safe also, and the Uranologia you mention without telling me what it is. It is something good,

I am sure, from the name connected with it; and if you would add to it your fable of the bees, we should receive valuable instruction as to the Uranologia both of the father and son, more valuable than the Chinese will from our Bible Societies. These incendiaries, finding that the days of fire and fagot are over in the Atlantic hemisphere, are now preparing to put the torch to the Asiatic regions. What would they say were the Pope to send annually to this country colonies of Jesuit priests with cargoes of their missal and translations of their Vulgate, to be put gratis into the hands of every one who would accept them? and to act thus nationally on us as a nation?

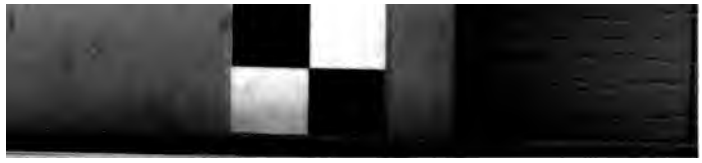
I proceed to the letter you were so good as to enclose me. It is an able letter, speaks volumes in few words, presents a profound view of awful truths, and lets us see truths more awful, which are still to follow. George the Third then, and his minister Pitt, and successors, have spent the fee simple of the kingdom, under pretence of governing it; their sinecures, salaries, pensions, priests, prelates, princes and eternal wars, have mortgaged to its full value the last foot of their soil. They are reduced to the dilemma of a bankrupt spendthrift, who, having run through his whole fortune, now asks himself what he is to do? It is in vain he dismisses his coaches and horses, his grooms, liveries, cooks and butlers. This done, he still finds he has nothing to eat. What was his property is now that of his creditors; if still in his hands, it is only as their trustee. To them it belongs, and

to them every farthing of its profits must go. The reformation of extravagances comes too late. All is gone. Nothing left for retrenchment or frugality to go on. The debts of England, however, being due from the whole nation to one-half of it, being as much the debt of the creditor as debtor, if it could be referred to a court of equity, principles might be devised to adjust it peaceably. Dismiss their parasites, ship off their paupers to this country, let the landholders give half their lands to the money lenders and these last relinquish one-half of their debts. They would still have a fertile island, a sound and effective population to labor it, and would hold that station among political powers, to which their natural resources and faculties entitle them. They would no longer, indeed, be the lords of the ocean and paymasters of all the princes of the earth. They would no longer enjoy the luxuries of pirating and plundering everything by sea, and of bribing and corrupting everything by land; but they might enjoy the more safe and lasting luxury of living on terms of equality, justice and good neighborhood with all nations. As it is, their first efforts will probably be to quiet things awhile by the palliatives of reformation; to nibble a little at pensions and sinecures, to bite off a bit here, and a bite there to amuse the people; and to keep the government a going by encroachments on the interest of the public debt, one per cent. of which, for instance, withheld, gives them a spare revenue of ten millions for present subsistence, and spunges, in

fact, two hundred millions of the debt. This remedy they may endeavor to administer in broken doses of a small pill at a time. The first may not occasion more than a strong nausea in the money lenders; but the second will probably produce a revulsion of the stomach, borborisms, and spasmodic calls for fair settlement and compromise. But it is not in the character of man to come to any peaceable compromise of such a state of things. The princes and priests will hold to the flesh-pots, the empty bellies will seize on them, and these being the multitude, the issue is obvious, civil war, massacre, exile as in France, until the stage is cleaned of everything but the multitude, and the lands get into their hands by such processes as the revolution will engender. They will then want peace and a government, and what will it be? certainly not a renewal of that which has already ruined them. Their habits of law and order, their ideas almost innate of the vital elements of free government, of trial by jury, *habeas corpus*, freedom of the press, freedom of opinion, and representative government, make them, I think, capable of bearing a considerable portion of liberty. They will probably turn their eyes to us, and be disposed to tread in our footsteps, seeing how safely these have led us into port. There is no part of our model to which they seem unequal, unless perhaps the elective presidency; and even that might possibly be rescued from the tumult of elections, by subdividing the electoral assemblages into very small

parts, such as of wards or townships, and making them simultaneous. But you know them so much better than I do, that it is presumption to offer my conjectures to you.

While it is much our interest to see this power reduced from its towering and borrowed height, to within the limits of its natural resources, it is by no means our interest that she should be brought below that, or lose her competent place among the nations of Europe. The present exhausted state of the continent will, I hope, permit them to go through their struggle without foreign interference, and to settle their new government according to their own will. I think it will be friendly to us, as the nation itself would be were it not artfully wrought up by the hatred their government bears us. And were they once under a government which should treat us with justice and equity, I should myself feel with great strength the ties which bind us together, of origin, language, laws and manners; and I am persuaded the two people would become in future, as it was with the ancient Greeks, among whom it was reproachful for Greek to be found fighting against Greek in a foreign army. The individuals of the nation I have ever honored and esteemed, the basis of their character being essentially worthy; but I consider their government as the most flagitious which has existed since the days of Philip of Macedon, whom they make their model. It is not only founded in corruption itself, but insinuates the same



poison into the bowels of every other, corrupts its councils, nourishes factions, stirs up revolutions, and places its own happiness in fomenting commotions and civil wars among others, thus rendering itself truly the *hostis humani generis*. The effect is now coming home to itself. Its first operation will fall on the individuals who have been the chief instruments in its corruptions, and will eradicate the families which have from generation to generation been fattening on the blood of their brethren; and this scoria once thrown off, I am in hopes a purer nation will result, and a purer government be instituted, one which, instead of endeavoring to make us their natural enemies, will see in us, what we really are, their natural friends and brethren, and more interested in a fraternal connection with them than with any other nation on earth. I look, therefore, to their revolution with great interest. I wish it to be as moderate and bloodless as will effect the desired object of an honest government, one which will permit the world to live in peace, and under the bonds of friendship and good neighborhood.

In this tremendous tempest, the distinctions of whig and tory will disappear like chaff on a troubled ocean. Indeed, they have been disappearing from the day Hume first began to publish his history. This single book has done more to sap the free principles of the English constitution than the largest standing army of which their patriots have been jealous. It is like the portraits of our countryman Wright,

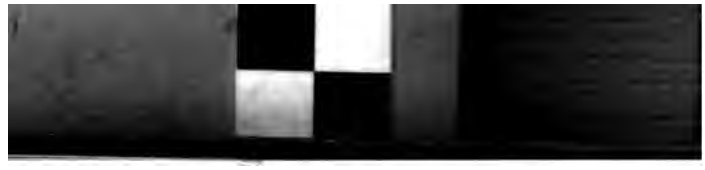
whose eye was so unhappy as to seize all the ugly features of his subject, and to present them faithfully, while it was entirely insensible to every lineament of beauty. So Hume has concentrated, in his fascinating style, all the arbitrary proceedings of the English kings, as true evidences of the constitution, and glided over its Whig principles as the unfounded pretensions of factious demagogues. He even boasts, in his life written by himself, that of the numerous alterations suggested by the readers of his work, he had never adopted one proposed by a Whig.

But what, in this same tempest, will become of their colonies and their fleets? Will the former assume independence, and the latter resort to piracy for subsistence, taking possession of some island as a *point d'appui?* A pursuit of these would add too much to the speculations on the situation and prospects of England, into which I have been led by the pithy text of the letter you so kindly sent me, and which I now return. It is worthy the pen of Tacitus. I add, therefore, only my affectonate and respectful souvenirs to Mrs. Adams and yourself.

JOHN ADAMS TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

QUINCY, December 16, 1816.

Your letter, dear Sir, of November 25th, from Poplar Forest, was sent to me from the post-office the next day after I had sent "The Analysis," with my thanks to you.



"Three vols. of Ideology!" Pray explain to me this Neological title! What does it mean? When Bonaparte used it, I was delighted with it, upon the common principle of delight in everything we cannot understand. Does it mean Idiotism? The science of *non compos mentuism?* The science of Lunacy? The theory of delirium? or does it mean the science of self-love? Of *amour propre?* or the elements of vanity?

Were I in France at this time, I could profess blindness and infirmity, and prove it too. I suppose he does not avow the analysis, as Hume did not avow his essay on human nature. That analysis, however, does not show a man of excessive mediocrity. Had I known any of these things two years ago, I would have written him a letter. Of all things, I wish to see his Ideology upon Montesquieu. If you, with all your influence, have not been able to get your own translation of it, with your own notes upon it, published in four years, where and what is the freedom of the American press? Mr. Taylor of Hazelwood, Port Royal, can have his voluminous and luminous works published with ease and despatch.

The Uranologia, as I am told, is a collection of plates, stamps, charts of the heavens upon a large scale, representing all the constellations. The work of some professor in Sweden. It is said to be the most perfect that ever has appeared. I have not seen it. Why should I ride fifteen miles to see it, when I can see the original every clear evening; and

especially as Dupuis has almost made me afraid to inquire after anything more of it than I can see with my naked eye in a star-light night?

That the Pope will send Jesuits to this country, I doubt not; and the church of England, missionaries too. And the Methodists, and the Quakers, and the Moravians, and the Swedenborgians, and the Menonists, and the Scottish Kirkers, and the Jacobites, and the Jacobins, and the Democrats, and the Aristocrats and the Monarchists, and the Despotists of all denominations; and every emissary of every one of these sects will find a party here already formed, to give him a cordial reception. No power or intelligence less than Raphael's Moderator, can reduce this chaos to order.

I am charmed with the fluency and rapidity of your reasoning on the state of Great Britain. I can deny none of your premises; but I doubt your conclusion. After all the convulsions that you foresee, they will return to that constitution which you say has ruined them and I say has been the source of all their power and importance. They have, as you say, too much sense and knowledge of liberty, ever to submit to simple monarchy, or absolute despotism, on the one hand; and too much of the devil in them ever to be governed by popular elections of Presidents, Senators, and Representatives in Congress. Instead of "turning their eyes to us," their innate feelings will turn them from us. They have been taught from their cradles to despise, scorn, insult,

and abuse us. They hate us more vigorously than they do the French. They would sooner adopt the simple monarchy of France, than our republican institutions. You compliment me with more knowledge of them than I can assume or pretend. If I should write you a volume of observations I made in England, you would pronounce it a satire. Suppose the "Refrain," as the French call it, or the "Burden of the Song," as the English express it, should be, the Religion, the Government, the Commerce, the Manufactures, the Army and Navy of Great Britain, are all reduced to the science of pounds, shillings and pence. Elections appeared to me a mere commercial traffic; mere bargain and sale. I have been told by sober, steady freeholders, that "they never had been and never would go to the poll, without being paid for their time, travel and expenses." Now, suppose an election for a President of the British empire. There must be a nomination of candidates by a national convention, Congress, or caucus—in which would be two parties—Whigs and Tories. Of course two candidates at least would be nominated. The empire is instantly divided into two parties at least. Every man must be paid for his vote by the candidate of his party. The only question would be, which party has the deepest purse. The same reasoning will apply to elections of Senators and Representatives too. A revolution might destroy the boroughs and the inequalities of representation, and might produce more toleration; and these acquisi-

tions might be worth all they would cost; but I dread the experiment.

Britain will never be our friend till we are her master.

This will happen in less time than you and I have been struggling with her power; provided we remain united. Aye! there's the rub! I fear there will be greater difficulties to preserve our Union, than you and I, our fathers, brothers, friends, disciples and sons have had, to form it. Towards Great Britain, I would adopt their own maxim. An English jockey says, "If I have a wild horse to break, I begin by convincing him I am his master; and then I will convince him that I am his friend." I am well assured that nothing will restrain Great Britain from injuring us, but fear.

You think that "in a revolution the distinction of Whig and Tory would disappear." I cannot believe this. That distinction arises from nature and society; is now, and ever will be, time without end, among Negroes, Indians, and Tartars, as well as federalists and republicans. Instead of "disappearing since Hume published his history," that history has only increased the Tories and diminished the Whigs. That history has been the bane of Great Britain. It has destroyed many of the best effects of the revolution of 1688. Style has governed the empire. Swift, Pope and Hume, have disgraced all the honest historians. Rapin and Burnet, Oldmixen and Coke, contain more honest truth than Hume and

Clarendon, and all their disciples and imitators. But who reads any of them at this day? Every one of the fine arts from the earliest times has been enlisted in the service of superstition and despotism. The whole world at this day gazes with astonishment at the grossest fictions, because they have been immortalized by the most exquisite artists—Homer and Milton, Phidias and Raphael The rabble of the classic skies, and the hosts of Roman Catholic saints and angels, are still adored in paint, and marble, and verse. Raphael has sketched the actors and scenes in all Apulius's Amours of Psyche and Cupid. Nothing is too offensive to morals, delicacy, or decency, for this painter. Raphael has painted in one of the most ostentatious churches in Italy—the Creation—and with what genius? God Almighty is represented as leaping into chaos, and boxing it about with His fists, and kicking it about with His feet, till He tumbles it into order!

Nothing is too impious or profane for this great master, who has painted so many inimitable Virgins and children.

To help me on in my career of improvement, I have now read four volumes of La Harpe's correspondence with Paul and a Russian minister. Philosophers! Never again think of annuling superstition per Saltum. *Testine cente.*

TO JOHN MELISH.

MONTICELLO, December 31, 1816.

SIR,—Your favor of November 23d, after a very long passage, is received, and with it the map which you have been so kind as to send me, for which I return you many thanks. It is handsomely executed, and on a well-chosen scale; giving a luminous view of the comparative possessions of different powers in our America. It is on account of the value I set on it, that I will make some suggestions. By the charter of Louis XIV. all the country comprehending the waters which flow into the Mississippi, was made a part of Louisiana. Consequently its northern boundary was the summit of the highlands in which its northern waters rise. But by the Xth Art. of the Treaty of Utrecht, France and England agreed to appoint commissioners to settle the boundary between their possessions in that quarter, and those commissioners settled it at the 49th degree of latitude. See Hutchinson's Topographical Description of Louisiana, p. 7. This it was which induced the British Commissioners, in settling the boundary with us, to follow the northern water line to the Lake of the Woods, at the latitude of 49°, and then go off on that parallel. This, then, is the true northern boundary of Louisiana.

The western boundary of Louisiana is, rightfully, the Rio Bravo, (its main stream,) from its mouth to its source, and thence along the highlands and moun-

tains dividing the waters of the Mississippi from those of the Pacific. The usurpations of Spain on the east side of that river, have induced geographers to suppose the Puerco or Salado to be the boundary. The line along the highlands stands on the charter of Louis XIV. that of the Rio Bravo, on the circumstance that, when La Salle took possession of the Bay of St. Bernard, Panuco was the nearest possession of Spain, and the Rio Bravo the natural half-way boundary between them.

On the waters of the Pacific, we can found no claim in right of Louisiana. If we claim that country at all, it must be on Astor's settlement near the mouth of the Columbia, and the principle of the *jus gentium* of America, that when a civilized nation takes possession of the mouth of a river in new country, that possession is considered as including all its waters.

The line of latitude of the southern source of the Multnomat might be claimed as appurtenant to Astoria. For its northern boundary, I believe an understanding has been come to between our government and Russia, which might be known from some of its members. I do not know it.

Although the irksomeness of writing, which you may perceive from the present letter, and its labor, oblige me now to withdraw from letter writing, yet the wish that your map should set to rights the ideas of our own countrymen, as well as foreign nations, as to our correct boundaries, has induced me to

make these suggestions, that you may bestow on them whatever inquiry they may merit. I salute you with esteem and respect.

TO MRS. ABIGAIL ADAMS.

MONTICELLO, January 11, 1817.

I owe you, dear Madam, a thousand thanks for the letters communicated in your favor of December 15th, and now returned. They give me more information than I possessed before, of the family of Mr. Tracy. But what is infinitely interesting, is the scene of the exchange of Louis XVIII. for Bonaparte. What lessons of wisdom Mr. Adams must have read in that short space of time! More than fall to the lot of others in the course of a long life. Man, and the man of Paris, under those circumstances, must have been a subject of profound speculation! It would be a singular addition to that spectacle, to see the same beast in the cage of St. Helena, like a lion in the tower. That is probably the closing verse of the chapter of his crimes. But not so with Louis. He has other vicissitudes to go through.

I communicated the letters, according to your permission, to my grand-daughter, Ellen Randolph, who read them with pleasure and edification. She is justly sensible of, and flattered by your kind notice of her; and additionally so, by the favorable recollections of our northern visiting friends. If Monticello has anything which has merited their remem-

brance, it gives it a value the more in our estimation; and could I, in the spirit of your wish, count backwards a score of years, it would not be long before Ellen and myself would pay our homage personally to Quincy. But those twenty years! Alas! where are they? With those beyond the flood. Our next meeting must then be in the country to which they have flown,—a country for us not now very distant. For this journey we shall need neither gold nor silver in our purse, nor scrip, nor coats, nor staves. Nor is the provision for it more easy than the preparation has been kind. Nothing proves more than this that the Being who presides over the world is essentially benevolent. Stealing from us, one by one, the faculties of enjoyment, searing our sensibilities, leading us, like the horse in his mill, round and round the same beaten circle,

> ——To see what we have seen,
> To taste the tasted, and at each return
> Less tasteful; o'er our palates to decant
> Another vintage—

Until satiated and fatigued with this leaden iteration, we ask our own *congé*. I heard once a very old friend, who had troubled himself with neither poets nor philosophers, say the same thing in plain prose, that he was tired of pulling off his shoes and stockings at night, and putting them on again in the morning. The wish to stay here is thus gradually extinguished; but not so easily that of returning once, in awhile, to see how things have gone on. Perhaps, however,

one of the elements of future felicity is to be a constant and unimpassioned view of what is passing here. If so, this may well supply the wish of occasional visits Mercier has given us a vision of the year 2440; but prophecy is one thing, and history another. On the whole, however, perhaps it is wise and well to be contented with the good things which the master of the feast places before us, and to be thankful for what we have, rather than thoughtful about what we have not. You and I, dear Madam, have already had more than an ordinary portion of life, and more, too, of health than the general measure. On this score I owe boundless thankfulness. Your health was, some time ago, not so good as it has been; and I perceive in the letters communicated some complaints still. I hope it is restored; and that life and health may be continued to you as many years as yourself shall wish, is the sincere prayer of your affectionate and respectful friend.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

MONTICELLO, January 11, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—Forty-three volumes read in one year, and twelve of them quarto! Dear Sir, how I envy you! Half a dozen octavos in that space of time, are as much as I am allowed. I can read by candlelight only, and stealing long hours from my rest; nor would that time be indulged to me, could I, by that light see to write. From sunrise to one or two

o'clock, and often from dinner to dark, I am drudging at the writing-table. And all this to answer letters into which neither interest nor inclination on my part enters; and often from persons whose names I have never before heard. Yet, writing civilly, it is hard to refuse them civil answers. This is the burden of my life, a very grievous one indeed, and one which I must get rid of. Delaplaine lately requested me to give him a line on the subject of his book; meaning, as I well knew, to publish it. This I constantly refuse; but in this instance yielded, that in saying a word for him, I might say two for myself. I expressed in it freely my sufferings from this source; hoping it would have the effect of an indirect appeal to the discretion of those, strangers and others, who, in the most friendly dispositions, oppress me with their concerns, their pursuits, their projects, inventions and speculations, political, moral, religious, mechanical, mathematical, historical, etc., etc., etc. I hope the appeal will bring me relief, and that I shall be left to exercise and enjoy correspondence with the friends I love, and on subjects which they, or my own inclinations present. In that case, your letters shall not be so long on my files unanswered, as sometimes they have been, to my great mortification.

To advert now to the subjects of those of December the 12th and 16th. Tracy's Commentaries on Montesquieu have never been published in the original. Duane printed a translation from the original manuscript a few years ago. It sold, I believe, readily,

and whether a copy can now be had, I doubt. If it can, you will receive it from my bookseller in Philadelphia, to whom I now write for that purpose. Tracy comprehends, under the word "Ideology," all the subjects which the French term *Morale*, as the correlative to *Physique*. His works on Logic, Government, Political Economy and Morality, he considers as making up the circle of ideological subjects, or of those which are within the scope of the understanding, and not of the senses. His Logic occupies exactly the ground of Locke's work on the Understanding. The translation of that on Political Economy is now printing; but it is no translation of mine. I have only had the correction of it, which was, indeed, very laborious. *Le premier jet* having been by some one who understood neither French nor English, it was impossible to make it more than faithful. But it is a valuable book.

The result of your fifty or sixty years of religious reading, in the four words, "Be just and good," is that in which all our inquiries must end; as the riddles of all the priesthoods end in four more, "*ubi panis, ibi deus.*" What all agree in, is probably right. What no two agree in, most probably wrong. One of our fan-coloring biographers, who paints small men as very great, inquired of me lately, with real affection too, whether he might consider as authentic, the change in my religion much spoken of in some circles. Now this supposed that they knew what had been my religion before, taking for it the word of

their priests, whom I certainly never made the confidants of my creed. My answer was, "say nothing of my religion. It is known to my God and myself alone. Its evidence before the world is to be sought in my life; if that has been *honest and dutiful* to society, the religion which has regulated it cannot be a bad one." Affectionately adieu.

TO WILLIAM LEE, ESQ.

MONTICELLO, January 16, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—I received, three days ago, a letter from M. Martin, 2d Vice President, and M. Parmantier, Secretary of "the French Agricultural and Manufacturing Society," dated at Philadelphia the 5th instant. It covered resolutions proposing to apply to Congress for a grant of two hundred and fifty thousand acres of land on the Tombigbee, and stating some of the general principles on which the society was to be founded; and their letter requested me to trace for them the basis of a social pact for the local regulations of their society, and to address the answer to yourself, their 1st Vice President at Washington. No one can be more sensible than I am of the honor of their confidence in me, so flatteringly manifested in this resolution; and certainly no one can feel stronger dispositions than myself to be useful to them, as well in return for this great mark of their respect, as from feelings for the situation of strangers, forced by the misfortunes of their native country to

seek another by adoption, so distant and so different from that in all its circumstances. I commiserate the hardships they have to encounter, and equally applaud the resolution with which they meet them, as well as the principles proposed for their government. That their emigration may be for the happiness of their descendants, I can believe; but from the knowledge I have of the country they have left, and its state of social intercourse and comfort, their own personal happiness will undergo severe trial here. The laws, however, which must effect this must flow from their own habits, their own feelings, and the resources of their own minds. No stranger to these could possibly propose regulations adapted to them. Every people have their own particular habits, ways of thinking, manners, etc., which have grown up with them from their infancy are become a part of their nature, and to which the regulations which are to make them happy must be accommodated. No member of a foreign country can have a sufficient sympathy with these. The institutions of Lycurgus, for example, would not have suited Athens, nor those of Solon, Lacedæmon. The organizations of Locke were impracticable for Carolina, and those of Rousseau and Mably for Poland. Turning inwardly on myself from these eminent illustrations of the truth of my observation, I feel all the presumption it would manifest, should I undertake to do what this respectable society is alone qualified to do suitably for itself. There are some preliminary questions,

too, which are particularly for their own consideration. It is proposed that this shall be a separate State? or a county of a State? or a mere voluntary association, as those of the Quakers, Dunkars, Menonists? A separate State it cannot be, because from the tract it asks it would not be more than twenty miles square; and in establishing new States regard is had to a certain degree of equality in size. If it is to be a county of a State, it cannot be governed by its own laws, but must be subject to those of the State of which it is a part. If merely a voluntary association, the submission of its members will be merely voluntary also; as no act of coercion would be permitted by the general law. These considerations must control the society, and themselves alone can modify their own intentions and wishes to to them. With this apology for declining a task to which I am so unequal, I pray them to be assured of my sincere wishes for their success and happiness, and yourself particularly of my high consideration and esteem.

TO DOCTOR THOMAS HUMPHREYS.

MONTICELLO, February 8, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—Your favor of January 2d did not come to my hands until the 5th instant. I concur entirely in your leading principles of gradual emancipation, of establishment on the coast of Africa, and the patronage of our nation until the emigrants shall

be able to protect themselves. The subordinate details might be easily arranged. But the bare proposition of purchase by the United States generally, would excite infinite indignation in all the States north of Maryland. The sacrifice must fall on the States alone which hold them; and the difficult question will be how to lessen this so as to reconcile our fellow citizens to it. Personally I am ready and desirous to make any sacrifice which shall ensure their gradual but complete retirement from the State, and effectually, at the same time, establish them elsewhere in freedom and safety. But I have not perceived the growth of this disposition in the rising generation, of which I once had sanguine hopes. No symptoms inform me that it will take place in my day. I leave it, therefore, to time, and not at all without hope that the day will come, equally desirable and welcome to us as to them. Perhaps the proposition now on the carpet at Washington to provide an establishment on the coast of Africa for voluntary emigrations of people of color, may be the corner stone of this future edifice. Praying for its completion as early as may most promote the good of all, I salute you with great esteem and respect.

JOHN ADAMS TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

QUINCY, April 19, 1817.

DEAR SIR —My loving and beloved friend Pickering, has been pleased to inform the world that I have

"few friends." I wanted to whip the rogue, and I had it in my power, if it had been in my will to do it, till the blood came. But all my real friends, as I thought then, with Dexter and Gray at their head insisted "that I should not say a word; that nothing that such a person could write would do me the least injury; that it would betray the Constitution and the government, if a President, out or in, should enter into a newspaper controversy with one of his ministers, whom he had removed from his office, in justification of himself for that removal, or anything else;" and they talked a great deal about the DIGNITY of the office of President, which I do not find that any other person, public or private, regards very much.

Nevertheless, I fear that Mr. Pickering's information is too true. It is impossible that any man should run such a gantlet as I have been driven through, and have many friends at last. This "all who know me know," though I cannot say: who love me, tell.

I have, however, either friends who wish to amuse and solace my old age, or enemies who mean to heap coals of fire on my head, and kill me with kindness; for they overwhelm me with books from all quarters, enough to obfuscate all eyes, and smother and stifle all human understanding. Chateaubriand, Grimm, Tucker, Dupuis, La Harpe, Sismondi, Eustace, a new translation of Herodotus, by Bedloe, with more notes than text. What should I do with all this lumber? I make my "woman-kind," as the antiquary ex-

presses it, read to me all the English, but as they will not read the French, I am obliged to excruciate my eyes to read it myself; and all to what purpose? I verily believe I was as wise and good, seventy years ago, as I am now. At that period Lemuel Bryant was my parish priest, and Joseph Cleverly my Latin schoolmaster. Lemuel was a jolly, jocular, and liberal scholar and divine. Joseph a scholar and a gentleman; but a bigoted Episcopalian, of the school of Bishop Saunders, and Dr. Hicks,—a downright conscientious, passive obedience man, in Church and State. The parson and the pedagogue lived much together, but were eternally disputing about government and religion. One day, when the schoolmaster had been more than commonly fanatical, and declared "if he were a monarch, *he would have but one religion in his dominions;*" the parson coolly replied, "Cleverly! you would be the best man in the world if you had no religion."

Twenty times in the course of my late reading have I been on the point of breaking out, "This would be the best of all possible worlds, if there were no religion in it!!!" But in this exclamation I should have been as fanatical as Bryant or Cleverly. Without religion this world would be something not fit to be mentioned in polite society, I mean hell. So far from believing in the total and universal depravity of human nature, I believe there is no individual totally depraved. The most abandoned scoundrel that ever existed, never yet wholly extinguished his

conscience, and while conscience remains there is some religion. Popes, Jesuits, and Sorbonists, and Inquisitors, have some conscience and some religion. So had Marius and Sylla, Cæsar, Catiline and Antony; and Augustus had not much more, let Virgil and Horace say what they will.

What shall we think of Virgil and Horace, Sallust, Quintilian, Pliny, and even Tacitus? and even Cicero, Brutus and Seneca? Pompey I leave out of the question, as a mere politician and soldier. Every one of the great creatures has left indelible marks of conscience, and consequently of religion, though every one of them has left abundant proofs of profligate violations of their consciences by their little and great passions and paltry interests.

The vast prospect of mankind, which these books have passed in review before me, from the most ancient records, histories, traditions and fables, that remain to us to the present day, has sickened my very soul, and almost reconciled me to Swift's travels among the Yahoos; yet I never can be a misanthrope —*Homo sum.* I must hate myself before I can hate my fellow men; and that I cannot, and will not do. No! I will not hate any of them, base, brutal, and devilish as some of them have been to me.

From the bottom of my soul, I pity my fellow men. Fears and terrors appear to have produced an universal credulity. Fears of calamities of life, and punishments after death, seem to have possessed the souls of all men. But fear of pain and death, here,

do not seem to have been so unconquerable, as fear of what is to come hereafter. Priests, Hierophants, Popes, Despots, Emperors, Kings, Princes, Nobles, have been as credulous as shoeblacks, boots and kitchen scullions. The former seem to have believed in their divine rights as sincerely as the latter.

Autos-da-fé, in Spain and Portugal, have been celebrated with as good faith as excommunications have been practised in Connecticut, or as baptisms have been refused in Philadelphia.

How is it possible that mankind should submit to be governed, as they have been, is to me an inscrutable mystery. How they could bear to be taxed to build the temple of Diana at Ephesus, the pyramids of Egypt, Saint Peter's at Rome, Notre Dame at Paris, St. Paul's in London, with a million et ceteras, when my navy yards and my quasi army made such a popular clamor, I know not. Yet all my peccadillos never excited such a rage as the late compensation law!

I congratulate you on the late election in Connecticut. It is a kind of epocha. Several causes have conspired. One which you would not suspect. Some one, no doubt instigated by the devil, has taken it into his head to print a new edition of the "Independent Whig," even in Connecticut, and has scattered the volumes through the State. These volumes, it is said, have produced a burst of indignation against priestcraft, bigotry and intolerance, and in conjunc-

tion with other causes, have produced the late election.

When writing to you I never know when to subscribe, J. A.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

MONTICELLO, May 5, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—Absences and avocations had prevented my acknowledging your favor of February the 2d, when that of April the 19th arrived. I had not the pleasure of receiving the former by the hands of Mr. Lyman. His business probably carried him in another direction; for I am far inland, and distant from the great line of communication between the trading cities. Your recommendations are always welcome, for indeed, the subjects of them always merit that welcome, and some of them in an extraordinary degree. They make us acquainted with what there is excellent in our ancient sister State of Massachusetts, once venerated and beloved, and still hanging on our hopes, for what need we despair of after the resurrection of Connecticut to light and liberality. I had believed that the last retreat of monkish darkness, bigotry, and abhorrence of those advances of the mind which had carried the other States a century ahead of them. They seemed still to be exactly where their forefathers were when they schismatized from the covenant of works, and to consider as dangerous heresies all innovations good or

bad. I join you, therefore, in sincere congratulations that this den of the priesthood is at length broken up, and that a Protestant Popedom is no longer to disgrace the American history and character. If by *religion* we are to understand *sectarian dogmas*, in which no two of them agree, then your exclamation on that hypothesis is just, "that this would be the best of all possible worlds, if there were no religion in it." But if the moral precepts, innate in man, and made a part of his physical constitution, as necessary for a social being, if the sublime doctrines of philanthropism and deism taught us by Jesus of Nazareth, in which all agree, constitute true religion, then, without it, this would be, as you again say, "something not fit to be named even, indeed, a hell."

You certainly acted wisely in taking no notice of what the malice of Pickering could say of you. Were such things to be answered, our lives would be wasted in the filth of fendings and provings, instead of being employed in promoting the happiness and prosperity of our fellow citizens. The tenor of your life is the proper and sufficient answer. It is fortunate for those in public trust, that posterity will judge them by their works, and not by the malignant vituperations and invectives of the Pickerings and Gardiners of their age. After all, men of energy of character must have enemies; because there are two sides to every question, and taking one with decision, and acting on it with effect, those who take the other will of course be hostile in proportion as they feel

that effect. Thus, in the Revolution, Hancock and the Adamses were the raw-head and bloody bones of tories and traitors who yet knew nothing of you personally but what was good. I do not entertain your apprehensions for the happiness of our brother Madison in a state of retirement. Such a mind as his, fraught with information and with matter for reflection, can never know *ennui*. Besides, there will always be work enough cut out for him to continue his active usefulness to his country. For example, he and Monroe (the President) are now here on the work of a collegiate institution to be established in our neighborhood, of which they and myself are three of six visitors. This, if it succeeds, will raise up children for Mr. Madison to employ his attention through life. I say if it succeeds; for we have two very essential wants in our way, first, means to compass our views; and, second, men qualified to fulfil them. And these, you will agree, are essential wants indeed.

I am glad to find you have a copy of Sismondi, because his is a field familiar to you, and on which you can judge him. His work is highly praised, but I have not yet read it. I have been occupied and delighted with reading another work, the title of which did not promise much useful information or amusement, "*l'Italia avanti il dominio dei Romani dal Micali.*" It has often, you know, been a subject of regret, that Carthage had no writer to give her s de of her own history, while her wealth, power and

splendor, prove she must have had a very distinguished policy and government. Micali has given the counterpart of the Roman history, for the nations over which they extended their dominion. For this he has gleaned up matter from every quarter, and furnished materials for reflection and digestion to those who, thinking as they read, have perceived that there was a great deal of matter behind the curtain, could that be fully withdrawn. He certainly gives new views of a nation whose splendor has masked and palliated their barbarous ambition. I am now reading Botta's history of our own Revolution. Bating the ancient practice which he has adopted, of putting speeches into mouths which never made them, and fancying motives of action which we never felt, he has given that history with more detail, precision and candor, than any writer I have yet met with. It is, to be sure, compiled from those writers; but it is a good secretion of their matter, the pure from the impure, and presented in a just sense of right, in opposition to usurpation.

Accept assurances for Mrs. Adams and yourself of my affectionate esteem and respect.

TO DR. JOSEPHUS B. STUART.

MONTICELLO, May, 10 1817.

DEAR SIR,—Your favor of April 2d is duly received. I am very sensible of the partiality with which you are so good as to review the course I have held in

public life, and I have also to be thankful to my fellow citizens for a like indulgence generally shown to my endeavors to be useful to them. They give quite as much credit as is merited to the difficulties supposed to attend the public administration. There are no mysteries in it. Difficulties indeed sometimes arise; but common sense and honest intentions will generally steer through them, and, where they cannot be surmounted, I have ever seen the well-intentioned part of our fellow citizens sufficiently disposed not to look for impossibilities. We all know that a farm, however large, is not more difficult to direct than a garden, and does not call for more attention or skill.

I hope with you that the policy of our country will settle down with as much navigation and commerce only as our own exchanges will require, and that the disadvantage will be seen of our undertaking to carry on that of other nations. This, indeed, may bring gain to a few individuals, and enable them to call off from our farms more laborers to be converted into lackeys and grooms for them, but it will bring nothing to our country but wars, debt, and dilapidation. This has been the course of England, and her examples have fearful influence on us. In copying her we do not seem to consider that like premises induce like consequences. The bank mania is one of the most threatening of these imitations. It is raising up a moneyed aristocracy in our country which has already set the government at defiance, and although forced at length to yield a little on this first essay of

their strength, their principles are unyielded and unyielding. These have taken deep root in the hearts of that class from which our legislators are drawn, and the sop to Cerberus from fable has become history. Their principles lay hold of the good, their pelf of the bad, and thus those whom the Constitution had placed as guards to its portals, are sophisticated or suborned from their duties. That paper money has some advantages, is admitted. But that its abuses also are inevitable, and, by breaking up the measure of value, makes a lottery of all private property, cannot be denied. Shall we ever be able to put a constitutional veto on it?

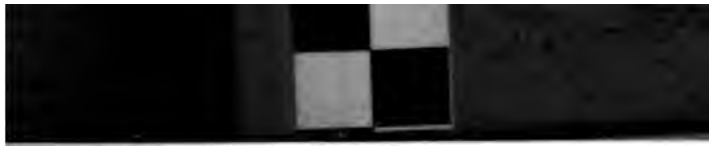
You say I must go to writing history. While in public life I had not time, and now that I am retired, I am past the time. To write history requires a whole life of observation, of inquiry, of labor and correction. Its materials are not to be found among the ruins of a decayed memory. At this day I should begin where I ought to have left off. The "*solve senes centem equum*," is a precept we learn in youth but for the practice of age; and were I to disregard it, it would be but a proof the more of its soundness. If anything has ever merited to me the respect of my fellow citizens, themselves, I hope, would wish me not to lose it by exposing the decay of faculties of which it was the reward. I must then, dear Sir, leave to yourself and your brethren of the rising generation, to arraign at your tribunal the actions of your predecessors, and to pronounce the sentence

they may have merited or incurred. If the sacrifices of that age have resulted in the good of this, then all is well, and we shall be rewarded by their approbation, and shall be authorized to say, "go ye and do likewise." To yourself I tender personally the assurance of my great esteem and respect.

TO MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE.

MONTICELLO, May 14, 1817.

Although, dear Sir, much retired from the world, and meddling little in its concerns, yet I think it almost a religious duty to salute at times my old friends, were it only to say and to know that "all's well." Our hobby has been politics; but all here is so quiet, and with you so desperate, that little matter is furnished us for active attention. With you too, it has long been forbidden ground, and therefore imprudent for a foreign friend to tread, in writing to you. But although our speculations might be intrusive, our prayers cannot but be acceptable, and mine are sincerely offered for the well-being of France. What government she can bear, depends not on the state of science, however exalted, in a select band of enlightened men, but on the condition of the general mind. That, I am sure, is advanced and will advance; and the last change of government was fortunate, inasmuch as the new will be less obstructive to the effects of that advancement. For I con-



sider your foreign military oppressions as an ephemeral obstacle only.

Here all is quiet. The British war has left us in debt; but that is a cheap price for the good it has done us. The establishment of the necessary manufactures among ourselves, the proof that our government is solid, can stand the shock of war, and is superior even to civil schism, are precious facts for us; and of these the strongest proofs were furnished, when, with four eastern States tied to us, as dead to living bodies, all doubt was removed as to the achievements of the war, had it continued. But its best effect has been the complete suppression of party. The federalists who were truly American, and their great mass was so, have separated from their brethren who were mere Anglomen, and are received with cordiality into the republican ranks. Even Connecticut, as a State, and the last one expected to yield its steady habits (which were essentially bigoted in politics as well as religion), has chosen a republican governor, and republican legislature. Massachusetts indeed still lags; because most deeply involved in the parricide crimes and treasons of the war. But her gangrene is contracting, the sound flesh advancing on it, and all there will be well. I mentioned Connecticut as the most hopeless of our States. Little Delaware had escaped my attention. That is essentially a Quaker State, the fragment of a religious sect which, there, in the other States, in England, are a homogeneous mass, acting

with one mind, and that directed by the Mother society in England. Dispersed, as the Jews, they still form, as those do, one nation, foreign to the land they live in. They are Protestant Jesuits, implicitly devoted to the will of their superior, and forgetting all duties to their country in the execution of the policy of their order. When war is proposed with England, they have religious scruples; but when with France, these are laid by, and they become clamorous for it. They are, however, silent, passive, and give no other trouble than of whipping them along. Nor is the election of Monroe an inefficient circumstance in our felicities. Four and twenty years, which he will accomplish, of administration in republican forms and principles, will so consecrate them in the eyes of the people as to secure them against the danger of change. The evanition of party dissensions has harmonized intercourse, and sweetened society beyond imagination. The war then has done us all this good, and the further one of assuring the world, that although attached to peace from a sense of its blessings, we will meet war when it is made necessary.

I wish I could give better hopes of our southern brethren. The achievement of their independence of Spain is no longer a question. But it is a very serious one, what will then become of them? Ignorance and bigotry, like other insanities, are incapable of self-government. They will fall under military despotism and become the murderous tools of the

ambition of their respective Bonapartes; and whether this will be for their greater happiness, the rule of one only has taught you to judge. No one, I hope, can doubt my wish to see them and all mankind exercising self-government, and capable of exercising it. But the question is not what we wish, but what is practicable? As their sincere friend and brother then, I do believe the best thing for them, would be for themselves to come to an accord with Spain, under the guarantee of France, Russia, Holland, and the United States, allowing to Spain a nominal supremacy, with authority only to keep the peace among them, leaving them otherwise all the powers of self-government, until their experience in them, their emancipation from their priests, and advancement in information, shall prepare them for complete independence. I exclude England from this confederacy, because her selfish principles render her incapable of honorable patronage or disinterested co-operation; unless indeed, what seems now probable, a revolution should restore to her an honest government, one which will permit the world to live in peace. Portugal grasping at an extension of her dominion in the south, has lost her great northern province of Pernambuco, and I shall not wonder if Brazil should revolt in mass, and send their royal family back to Portugal. Brazil is more populous, more wealthy, more energetic, and as wise as Portugal. I have been insensibly led, my dear friend, while writing to you, to indulge in that line of senti-

ment in which we have been always associated, forgetting that these are matters not belonging to my time. Not so with you, who have still many years to be a spectator of these events. That these years may indeed be many and happy, is the sincere prayer of your affectionate friend.

JOHN ADAMS TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

QUINCY, May 18, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—Lyman was mortified that he could not visit Monticello. He is gone to Europe a second time. I regret that he did not see you, he would have executed any commission for you in the literary line, at any pain or any expense. I have many apprehensions for his health, which is very delicate and precarious, but he is seized with the mania of all our young clerical spirits for foreign travel; I fear they will lose more than they acquire, they will lose that unadulterated enthusiasm for their native country, which has produced the greatest characters among us.

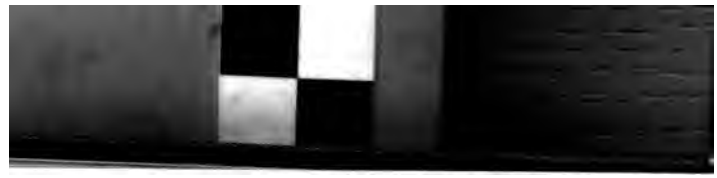
Oh! Lord! Do you think that Protestant Popedom is annihilated in America? Do you recollect, or have you ever attended to the ecclesiastical strifes in Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York, and every part of New England? What a mercy it is that these people cannot whip, and crop, and pillory, and roast, *as yet* in the United States! If they could, they would. Do you know the General of the Jesuits, and

consequently all his host, have their eyes on this country? Do you know that the Church of England is employing more means and more art, to propagate their demi-popery among us, than ever? Quakers, Anabaptists, Moravians, Swedenborgians, Methodists, Unitarians, Nothingarians in all Europe are employing underhand means to propagate their sectarian system in these States.

The multitude and diversity of them, you will say, is our security against them all. God grant it. But if we consider that the Presbyterians and Methodists are far the most numerous and the most likely to unite, let a George Whitefield arise, with a military cast, like Mahomet or Loyola, and what will become of all the other sects who can never unite?

My friends or enemies continue to overwhelm me with books. Whatever may be their intention, charitable or otherwise, they certainly contribute to continue me to vegetate, much as I have done for the sixteen years last past.

Sir John Malcolm's history of Persia, and Sir William Jones' works, are now poured out upon me, and a little cargo is coming from Europe. What can I do with all this learned lumber? Is it necessary to salvation to investigate all these Cosmogonies and Mythologies? Are Bryant, Gebelin, Dupuis, or Sir William Jones, right? What a frown upon mankind was the premature death of Sir William Jones! Why could not Jones and Dupuis have conversed or corresponded with each other? Had Jones read Dupuis,



or Dupuis Jones, the works of both would be immensely improved, though each would probably have adhered to his system.

I should admire to see a council composed of Gebelin, Bryant, Jones and Dupuis. Let them live together and compare notes. The human race ought to contribute to furnish them with all the books in the universe, and the means of subsistence.

I am not expert enough in Italian to read Botta, and I know not that he has been translated. Indeed, I have been so little satisfied with histories of the American Revolution, that I have long since ceased to read them. The truth is lost, in adulatory panegyrics, and in vituperary insolence. I wish you, Mr. Madison, and Mr. Monroe, success in your collegiate institution. And I wish that superstition in religion, exciting superstition in politics, and both united in directing military force, alias glory, may never blow up all your benevolent and philanthropic lucubrations. But the history of all ages is against you.

It is said that no effort in favor of virtue is ever lost. I doubt whether it was ever true; whether it is now true; but hope it will be true. In the moral government of the world, no doubt it was, is, and ever will be true; but it has not yet appeared to be true on this earth.

I am, Sir, sincerely your friend.

P. S. Have you seen the Philosophy of Human Nature, and the History of the War in the Western

States, from Kentucky? How vigorously science and literature spring up, as well as patriotism and heroism, in transalleganian regions! Have you seen Wilkinson's history? etc., etc.

JOHN ADAMS TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

QUINCY, May 26, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Leslie Combes of Kentucky has sent me a History of the late War in the Western Country, by Mr. Robert B. M'Siffee, and the Philosophy of Human Nature, by Joseph Buchanan. The history I am glad to see, because it will preserve facts to the honor and immortal glory of the Western people. Indeed, I am not sorry that the Philosophy has been published, because it has been a maxim with me for sixty years at least, never to be afraid of a book.

Nevertheless, I cannot foresee much utility in reviewing, in this country, the controversy between the Spiritualists and the Materialists. Why should time be wasted in disputing about two substances, when both parties agree that neither knows anything about either?

If spirit is an abstraction, a conjecture, a chimera; matter is an abstraction, a conjecture, a chimera; for we know as much, or rather as little, about one as the other. We may read Cudworth, Le Clerc, Leibnitz, Berkley, Hume, Bolingbroke and Priestley, and a million other volumes in all ages, and be obliged at last to confess that we have learned nothing. Spirit

and matter still remain riddles. Define the terms, however, and the controversy is soon settled. If spirit is an active something, and matter an inactive something, it is certain that one is not the other. We can no more conceive that extension, or solidity, can think, or feel, or see, or hear, or taste, or smell; than we can conceive that perception, memory, imagination, or reason, can remove a mountain, or blow a rock. This enigma has puzzled mankind from the beginning, and probably will to the end. Economy of time requires that we should waste no more in so idle an amusement.

In the eleventh discourse of Sir William Jones, before the Asiatic Society, vol. iii., page 229, of his works, we find that Materialists and Immaterialists existed in India, and that they accused each other of atheism, before Berkeley, or Priestley, or Dupuis, or Plato, or Pythagoras, was born.

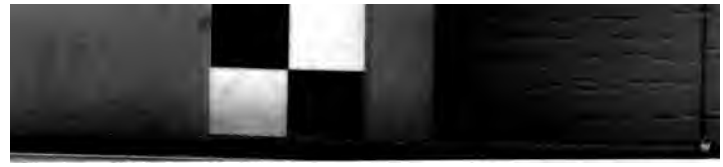
Indeed, Newton himself appears to have discovered nothing that was not known to the ancient Indians. He has only furnished more complete demonstrations of the doctrines they taught. Sir John Malcolm agrees with Jones and Dupuis, in the Astrological origin of heathen mythologies. Vain man! mind your own business! Do no wrong;—do all the good you can! Eat your canvas-back ducks! Drink your Burgundy! Sleep your siesta when necessary, and TRUST IN GOD!

What a mighty bubble, what a tremendous waterspout, has Napoleon been, according to his life, writ-

ten by himself! He says he was the creature of the principles and manners of the age; by which, no doubt, he means the age of Reason; the progress of Manilius' Ratio, of Plato's Logos, etc. I believe him. A whirlwind raised him, and a whirlwind blowed him away to St. Helena. He is very confident that the age of Reason is not past, and so am I; but I hope that Reason will never again rashly and hastily create such creatures as him. Liberty, equality, fraternity, and humanity, will never again, I hope, blindly surrender themselves to an unbounded ambition for national conquests, nor implicitly commit themselves to the custody and guardianship of arms and heroes. If they do, they will again end in St. Helena, Inquisitions, Jesuits, and *sacre liques*.

Poor Laureate Southey is writhing in torments under the laugh of the three kingdoms, all Europe, and America, upon the publication of his "Wat Tyler." I wonder whether he or Bonaparte suffers most. I congratulate you, and Madison and Monroe, on your noble employment in founding a university. From such a noble triumvirate, the world will expect something very great and very new; but if it contains anything quite original, and very excellent, I fear the prejudices are too deeply rooted to suffer it to last long, though it may be accepted at first. It will not always have three such colossal reputations to support it.

The Pernambuco Ambassador, his Secretary of legation, and private Secretary, respectable people,



have made me a visit. Having been some year or two in a similar situation, I could not but sympathize with him. As Bonaparte says, the age of Reason is not ended. Nothing can totally extinguish or eclipse the light which has been shed abroad by the press.

I am, Sir, with hearty wishes for your health and happiness, your friend and humble servant.

TO DOCTOR JOHN MANNERS.

MONTICELLO, June 12, 1817.

SIR,—Your favor of May 20th has been received some time since, but the increasing inertness of age renders me slow in obeying the calls of the writing-table, and less equal than I have been to its labors.

My opinion on the right of Expatriation has been, so long ago as the year 1776, consigned to record in the act of the Virginia code, drawn by myself, recognizing the right expressly, and prescribing the mode of exercising it. The evidence of this natural right, like that of our right to life, liberty, the use of our faculties, the pursuit of happiness, is not left to the feeble and sophistical investigations of reason, but is impressed on the sense of every man. We do not claim these under the charters of kings or legislators, but under the King of kings. If he has made it a law in the nature of man to pursue his own happiness, he has left him free in the choice of place as well as mode; and we may safely call on the whole body of

English jurists to produce the map on which Nature has traced, for each individual, the geographical line which she forbids him to cross in pursuit of happiness. It certainly does not exist in his mind. Where, then, is it? I believe, too, I might safely affirm, that there is not another nation, civilized or savage, which has ever denied this natural right. I doubt if there is another which refuses its exercise. I know it is allowed in some of the most respectable countries of continental Europe, nor have I ever heard of one in which it was not. How it is among our savage neighbors, who have no law but that of Nature, we all know.

Though long estranged from legal reading and reasoning, and little familiar with the decisions of particular judges, I have considered that respecting the obligation of the common law in this country as a very plain one, and merely a question of document. If we are under that law, the document which made us so can surely be produced; and as far as this can be produced, so far we are subject to it, and farther we are not. Most of the States did, I believe, at an early period of their legislation, adopt the English law, common and statute, more or less in a body, as far as localities admitted of their application. In these States then, the common law, so far as adopted, is the *lex loci*. Then comes the law of Congress, declaring that what is law in any State, shall be the rule of decision in their courts, as to matters arising within that State, except when controlled by their

own statutes. But this law of Congress has been considered as extending to civil cases only; and that no such provision has been made for criminal ones. A similar provision, then, for criminal offences, would, in like manner, be an adoption of more or less of the common law, as part of the *lex loci*, where the offence is committed; and would cover the whole field of legislation for the General Government. I have turned to the passage you refer to in Judge Cooper's Justinian, and should suppose the general expressions there used would admit of modifications conformable to this doctrine. It would alarm me indeed, in any case, to find myself entertaining an opinion different from that of a judgment so accurately organized as his. But I am quite persuaded that, whenever Judge Cooper shall be led to consider that question simply and nakedly, it is so much within his course of thinking, as liberal as logical, that, rejecting all blind and undefined obligation, he will hold to the positive and explicit precepts of the law alone. Accept these hasty sentiments on the subjects you propose, as hazarded in proof of my great esteem and respect.

TO BARON ALEXANDER VON HUMBOLDT.

MONTICELLO, June 13, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—The receipt of your Distributio Geographica Plantarum, with the duty of thanking you for a work which sheds so much new and valuable

light on botanical science, excites the desire, also, of presenting myself to your recollection, and of expressing to you those sentiments of high admiration and esteem, which, although long silent, have never slept. The physical information you have given us of a country hitherto so shamefully unknown, has come exactly in time to guide our understandings in the great political revolution now bringing it into prominence on the stage of the world. The issue of its struggles, as they respect Spain, is no longer matter of doubt. As it respects their own liberty, peace and happiness, we cannot be quite so certain. Whether the blinds of bigotry, the shackles of the priesthood, and the fascinating glare of rank and wealth, give fair play to the common sense of the mass of their people, so far as to qualify them for self-government, is what we do not know. Perhaps our wishes may be stronger than our hopes. The first principle of republicanism is, that the *lex majoris partis* is the fundamental law of every society of individuals of equal rights; to consider the will of the society enounced by the majority of a single vote, as sacred as if unanimous, is the first of all lessons in importance, yet the last which is thoroughly learnt. This law once disregarded, no other remains but that of force, which ends necessarily in military despotism. This has been the history of the French Revolution, and I wish the understanding of our Southern brethren may be sufficiently enlarged and firm to see that their fate depends on its sacred observance.

In our America we are turning to public improvements. Schools, roads, and canals are everywhere either in operation or contemplation. The most gigantic undertaking yet proposed, is that of New York, for drawing the waters of Lake Erie into the Hudson. The distance is 353 miles, and the height to be surmounted 661 feet. The expense will be great, but its effect incalculably powerful in favor of the Atlantic States. Internal navigation by steamboats is rapidly spreading through all our States, and that by sails and oars will ere long be looked back to as among the curiosities of antiquity. We count much, too, on its efficacy for harbor defence; and it will soon be tried for navigation by sea. We consider the employment of the contributions which our citizens can spare, after feeding, and clothing, and lodging themselves comfortably, as more useful, more moral, and even more splendid, than that preferred by Europe, of destroying human life, labor and happiness.

I write this letter without knowing where it will find you. But wherever that may be, I am sure it will find you engaged in something instructive for man. If at Paris, you are of course in habits of society with Mr. Gallatin, our worthy, our able, and excellent minister, who will give you, from time to time, the details of the progress of a country in whose prosperity you are so good as to feel an interest, and in which your name is revered among those of the great worthies of the world. God bless you, and

preserve you long to enjoy the gratitude of your fellow men, and to be blessed with honors, health and happiness.

TO MONSIEUR BARRÉ DE MARBOIS.

MONTICELLO, June 14, 1817.

I thank you, dear Sir, for the copy of the interesting narrative of the Complet d'Arnold, which you have been so kind as to send me. It throws light on that incident of history which we did not possess before. An incident which merits to be known, as a lesson to mankind, in all its details. This mark of your attention recalls to my mind the earlier period of life at which I had the pleasure of your personal acquaintance, and renews the sentiments of high respect and esteem with which that acquaintance inspired me. I had not failed to accompany your personal sufferings during the civil convulsions of your country, and had sincerely sympathized with them. An awful period, indeed, has passed in Europe since our first acquaintance. When I left France at the close of '89, your revolution was, as I thought, under the direction of able and honest men. But the madness of some of their successors, the vices of others, the malicious intrigues of an envious and corrupting neighbor, the tracasserie of the Directory, the usurpations, the havoc, and devastations of your Attila, and the equal usurpations, depredations and oppressions of your hypocritical deliverers, will

form a mournful period in the history of man, a period of which the last chapter will not be seen in your day or mine, and one which I still fear is to be written in characters of blood. Had Bonaparte reflected that such is the moral construction of the world, that no national crime passes unpunished in the long run, he would not now be in the cage of St. Helena; and were your present oppressors to reflect on the same truth, they would spare to their own countries the penalties on their present wrongs which will be inflicted on them on future times. The seeds of hatred and revenge which they are now sowing with a large hand, will not fail to produce their fruits in time. Like their brother robbers on the highway, they suppose the escape of the moment a final escape, and deem infamy and future risk countervailed by present gain. Our lot has been happier. When you witnessed our first struggles in the War of Independence, you little calculated, more than we did, on the rapid growth and prosperity of this country; on the practical demonstration it was about to exhibit, of the happy truth that man is capable of self-government, and only rendered otherwise by the moral degradation designedly superinduced on him by the wicked acts of his tyrants.

I have much confidence that we shall proceed successfully for ages to come, and that, contrary to the principle of Montesquieu, it will be seen that the larger the extent of country, the more firm its republican structure, if founded, not on conquest, but in

principles of compact and equality. My hope of its duration is built much on the enlargement of the resources of life going hand in hand with the enlargement of territory, and the belief that men are disposed to live honestly, if the means of doing so are open to them. With the consolation of this belief in the future result of our labors, I have that of other prophets who foretell distant events, that I shall not live to see it falsified. My theory has always been, that if we are to dream, the flatteries of hope are as cheap, and pleasanter than the gloom of despair. I wish to yourself a long life of honors, health and happiness.

TO ALBERT GALLATIN.

MONTICELLO, June 16, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—The importance that the enclosed letters should safely reach their destination, impels me to avail myself of the protection of your cover. This is an inconvenience to which your situation exposes you, while it adds to the opportunities of exercising yourself in works of charity.

According to the opinion I hazarded to you a little before your departure, we have had almost an entire change in the body of Congress. The unpopularity of the compensation law was completed, by the manner of repealing it as to all the world except themselves. In some States, it is said, every member is changed; in all, many. What opposition there

was to the original law, was chiefly from Southern members. Yet many of those have been left out, because they received the advanced wages. I have never known so unanimous a sentiment of disapprobation; and what is remarkable is, that it was spontaneous. The newspapers were almost entirely silent, and the people not only unled by their leaders, but in opposition to them. I confess I was highly pleased with this proof of the innate good sense, the vigilance, and the determination of the people to act for themselves.

Among the laws of the late Congress, some were of note; a navigation act, particularly, applicable to those nations only who have navigation acts; pinching one of them especially, not only in the general way, but in the intercourse with her foreign possessions. This part may re-act on us, and it remains for trial which may bear longest. A law respecting our conduct as a neutral between Spain and her contending colonies, was passed by a majority of one only, I believe, and against the very general sentiment of our country. It is thought to strain our complaisance to Spain beyond her right or merit, and almost against the right of the other party, and certainly against the claims they have to our good wishes and neighborly relations. That we should wish to see the people of other countries free, is as natural, and at least as justifiable, as that one King should wish to see the Kings of other countries maintained in their despotism. Right to both

parties, innocent favor to the juster cause, is our proper sentiment.

You will have learned that an act for internal improvement, after passing both Houses, was negatived by the President. The act was founded, avowedly, on the principle that the phrase in the Constitution which authorizes Congress "to lay taxes, to pay the debts and provide for the general welfare," was an extension of the powers specifically enumerated to whatever would promote the general welfare; and this, you know, was the federal doctrine. Whereas, our tenet ever was, and, indeed, it is almost the only landmark which now divides the federalists from the republicans, that Congress had not unlimited powers to provide for the general welfare, but were restrained to those specifically enumerated; and that, as it was never meant they should provide for that welfare but by the exercise of the enumerated powers, so it could not have been meant they should raise money for purposes which the enumeration did not place under their action; consequently, that the specification of powers is a limitation of the purposes for which they may raise money. I think the passage and rejection of this bill a fortunate incident. Every State will certainly concede the power; and this will be a national confirmation of the grounds of appeal to them, and will settle forever the meaning of this phrase, which, by a mere grammatical quibble, has countenanced the General Government in a claim of universal power.

For in the phrase, "to lay taxes, to pay the debts and provide for the general welfare," it is a mere question of syntax, whether the two last infinitives are governed by the first or are distinct and co-ordinate powers; a question unequivocally decided by the exact definition of powers immediately following. It is fortunate for another reason, as the States, in conceding the power, will modify it, either by requiring the federal ratio of expense in each State, or otherwise, so as to secure us against its partial exercise. Without this caution, intrigue, negotiation, and the barter of votes might become as habitual in Congress, as they are in those legislatures which have the appointment of officers, and which, with us, is called "logging," the term of the farmers for their exchanges of aid in rolling together the logs of their newly-cleared grounds. Three of our papers have presented us the copy of an act of the legislature of New York, which, if it has really passed, will carry us back to the times of the darkest bigotry and barbarism, to find a parallel. Its purport is, that all those who shall *hereafter* join in communion with the religious sect of Shaking Quakers, shall be deemed civilly dead, their marriages dissolved, and all their children and property taken out of their hands. This act being published nakedly in the papers, without the usual signatures, or any history of the circumstances of its passage, I am not without a hope it may have been a mere abortive attempt. It contrasts singularly with a cotemporary vote of the

Pennsylvania legislature, who, on a proposition to make the belief in God a necessary qualification for office, rejected it by a great majority, although assuredly there was not a single atheist in their body. And you remember to have heard, that when the act for religious freedom was before the Virginia Assembly, a motion to insert the name of Jesus Christ before the phrase, "the author of our holy religion," which stood in the bill, was rejected, although that was the creed of a great majority of them.

I have been charmed to see that a Presidential election now produces scarcely any agitation. On Mr. Madison's election there was little, on Monroe's all but none. In Mr. Adams' time and mine, parties were so nearly balanced as to make the struggle fearful for our peace. But since the decided ascendency of the republican body, federalism has looked on with silent but unresisting anguish. In the Middle, Southern and Western States, it is as low as it ever can be; for nature has made some men monarchists and tories by their constitution, and some, of course, there always will be.

* * * * * * * * *

We have had a remarkably cold winter. At Hallowell, in Maine, the mercury was at thirty-four degrees below zero, of Fahrenheit, which is sixteen degrees lower than it was in Paris in 1788–9. Here it was at six degrees above zero, which is our greatest degree of cold.

Present me respectfully to Mrs. Gallatin, and be assured of my constant and affectionate friendship.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

POPLAR FOREST, September 8, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—A month's absence from Monticello has added to the delay of acknowledging your last letters, and indeed for a month before I left it, our projected college gave me constant employment; for, being the only visitor in its immediate neighborhood, all its administrative business falls on me, and that, where building is going on, is not a little. In yours of July 15th, you express a wish to see our plan, but the present visitors have sanctioned no plan as yet. Our predecessors, the first trustees, had desired me to propose one to them, and it was on that occasion I asked and received the benefit of your ideas on the subject. Digesting these with such other schemes as I had been able to collect, I made out a prospectus, the looser and less satisfactory from the uncertain amount of the funds to which it was to be adapted. This I addressed, in the form of a letter, to their President, Peter Carr, which, going before the legislature when a change in the constitution of the college was asked, got into the public papers, and, among others, I think you will find it in Niles' Register, in the early part of 1815. This, however, is to be considered but as a *premiere ebauche*, for the consideration and amendment of the present visitors, and to be accommodated to one of two conditions of things. If the institution is to depend on private donations alone, we shall be forced to accumulate on

the shoulders of four professors a mass of sciences which, if the legislature adopts it, should be distributed among ten. We shall be ready for a professor of languages in April next, for two others the following year, and a fourth a year after. How happy should we be if we could have a Ticknor for our first. A critical classic is scarcely to be found in the United States. To this professor, a fixed salary of five hundred dollars, with liberal tuition fees from the pupils, will probably give two thousand dollars a year. We are now on the look-out for a professor, meaning to accept of none but of the very first order.

You ask if I have seen Buchanan's, McAfee's, or Wilkinson's books? I have seen none of them, but have lately read, with great pleasure, Reid and Eaton's Life of Jackson, if life may be called what is merely a history of his campaign of 1814. Reid's part is well written. Eaton's continuation is better for its matter than style. The whole, however, is valuable.

I have lately received a pamphlet of extreme interest from France. It is De Pradt's Historical Recital of the first return of Louis XVIII. to Paris. It is precious for the minutiæ of the proceedings which it details, and for their authenticity, as from an eye-witness. Being but a pamphlet I enclose it for your perusal, assured, if you have not seen it, that it will give you pleasure. I will ask its return, because I value it as a morsel of genuine history, a thing so rare as to be always valuable. I have received some information from an eye-witness also of what passed

on the occasion of the second return of Louis XVIII. The Emperor Alexander, it seems, was solidly opposed to this. In the consultation of the allied sovereigns and their representatives with the executive council at Paris, he insisted that the Bourbons were too incapable and unworthy of being placed at the head of the nation; declared he would support any other choice they should freely make, and continued to urge most strenuously that some other choice should be made. The debates ran high and warm, and broke off after midnight, every one retaining his own opinion. He lodged, as you know, at Talleyrand's. When they returned into council the next day, his host had overcome his firmness. Louis XVIII. was accepted, and through the management of Talleyrand accepted without any capitulation, although the sovereigns would have consented that he should be first required to subscribe and swear to the constitution prepared, before permission to enter the kingdom. It would seem as if Talleyrand had been afraid to admit the smallest interval of time, lest a change of mind would bring back Bonaparte on them. But I observe that the friends of a limited monarchy there consider the popular representation as much improved by the late alteration, and confident it will in the end produce a fixed government in which an elective body, fairly representative of the people, will be an efficient element.

I congratulate Mrs. Adams and yourself on the return of your excellent and distinguished son, and

our country still more on such a minister of their foreign affairs; and I renew to both the assurance of my high and friendly respect and esteem.

TO GEORGE FLOWER.

POPLAR FOREST, September 12, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—Your favor of August 12th was yesterday received at this place, and I learn from it with pleasure that you have found a tract of country which will suit you for settlement. To us your first purchase would have been more gratifying, by adding yourself and your friends to our society; but the overruling consideration, with us as with you, is your own advantage, and as it would doubtless be a great comfort to you to have your ancient neighbors and friends settled around you. I sincerely wish that your proposition to "purchase a tract of land in the Illinois on favorable terms, for introducing a colony of English farmers," may encounter no difficulties from the established rules of our Land Department. The general law prescribes an open sale, where all citizens may compete on an equal footing for any lot of land which attracts their choice. To dispense with this in any particular case, requires a special law of Congress, and to special legislation we are generally averse, lest a principle of favoritism should creep in and pervert that of equal rights. It has, however, been done on some occasions where a special national advantage has been expected to

overweigh that of adherence to the general rule. The promised introduction of the culture of the vine procured a special law in favor of the Swiss settlement on the Ohio. That of the culture of oil, wine and other southern productions, did the same lately for the French settlement on the Tombigbee. It remains to be tried whether that of an improved system of farming, interesting to so great a proportion of our citizens, may not also be thought worth a dispensation with the general rule. This I suppose is the principal ground on which your proposition will be questioned. For although as to other foreigners it is thought better to discourage their settling together in large masses, wherein, as in our German settlements, they preserve for a long time their own languages, habits, and principles of government, and that they should distribute themselves sparsely among the natives for quicker amalgamation, yet English emigrants are without this inconvenience. They differ from us little but in their principles of government, and most of those (merchants excepted) who come here, are sufficiently disposed to adopt ours. What the issue, however, of your proposition may probably be, I am less able to advise you than many others; for during the last eight or ten years I have no knowledge of the administration of the Land Office or the principles of its government. Even the persons on whom it will depend are all changed within that interval, so as to leave me small means of being useful to you. Whatever they may be, how-

ever, they shall be freely exercised for your advantage, and that, not on the selfish principle of increasing our own population at the expense of other nations, for the additions to that from emigration are but as a drop in a bucket to those by natural procreation, but to consecrate a sanctuary for those whom the misrule of Europe may compel to seek happiness in other climes. This refuge once known will produce reaction on the happiness even of those who remain there, by warning their task-masters that when the evils of Egyptian oppression become heavier than those of the abandonment of country, another Canaan is open where their subjects will be received as brothers, and secured against like oppressions by a participation in the right of self-government. If additional motives could be wanting with us to the maintenance of this right, they would be found in the animating consideration that a single good government becomes thus a blessing to the whole earth, its welcome to the oppressed restraining within certain limits the measure of their oppressions. But should even this be counteracted by violence on the right of expatriation, the other branch of our example then presents itself for imitation, to rise on their rulers and do as we have done. You have set to your own country a good example, by showing them a peaceable mode of reducing their rulers to the necessity of becoming more wise, more moderate, and more honest, and I sincerely pray that the example may work for the benefit of those who cannot follow it, as it will for your own.

With Mr. Burckbeck, the associate of your late exploratory journeying, I have not the happiness of personal acquaintance; but I know him through his narrative of your journeyings together through France. The impressions received from that, give me confidence that a participation with yourself in assurances of the esteem and respect of a stranger will not be unacceptable to him, and the less when given through you and associated with those to yourself.

JOHN ADAMS TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

QUINCY, October 10, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—I thank you for your kind congratulations on the return of my little family from Europe. To receive them all in fine health and good spirits, after so long an absence, was a greater blessing than at my time of life, when they went away, I had any right to hope, or reason to expect.

If the Secretary of State can give satisfaction to his fellow citizens in his new office, it will be a source of consolation to me while I live; although it is not probable that I shall long be a witness of his good success, or ill success. I shall soon be obliged to say to him, and to you, and to your country and mine, God bless you all! Fare thee well! Indeed, I need not wait a moment. I can say all that now, with as good a will, and as clear a conscience, as at any time past, or future.

I thank you, also, for the loan of De Pradt's narration of the intrigues, at the second restoration of the Bourbons. In this, as in many other instances, is seen the influence of a single subtle mind, and a trifling accident, in deciding the fate of mankind for ages. De Pradt and Talleyrand were well associated.

I have ventured to send the pamphlet to Washington with a charge to return it to you. The French have a King, a chamber of Peers, and a chamber of Deputies. *Voila! les ossimens* of a constitution of a limited monarchy; and of a good one, provided the bones are united by good joints, and knitted together by strong tendons. But where does the sovereignty reside? Are the three branches sufficiently defined? A fair representation of the body of the people by elections, sufficiently frequent, is essential to a free government; but if the Commons cannot make themselves respected by the Peers, and the King, they can do no good, nor prevent any evil.

Can any organization of government secure public and private liberty without a general or universal freedom, without license, or licentiousness of thinking, speaking, and writing. Have the French such freedom? Will their religion, or policy, allow it?

When I think of liberty, and a free government, in an ancient, opulent, populous, and commercial empire, I fear I shall always recollect a fable of Plato.

Love is a son of the god of riches and the goddess of poverty. He inherits from his father the intrepidity of his courage, the enthusiasm of his thoughts,

his generosity, his prodigality, his confidence in himself, the opinion of his own merit, the impatience to have always the preference; but he derives from his mother that indigence which makes him always a beggar; that importunity with which he demands everything; that timidity which sometimes hinders him from daring to ask anything; that disposition which he has to servitude, and that dread of being despised, which he can never overcome.

Such is Love according to Plato. Who calls him a demon? And such is liberty in France, and England, and all other great, rich, old, corrupted commercial nations. The opposite qualities of the father and mother are perpetually tearing to pieces himself and his friends as well as his enemies.

Mr. Monroe has got the universal character among all our common people of "A very smart man." And verily I am of the same mind. I know not another who could have executed so great a plan so cleverly.

I wish him the same happy success through his whole administration.

I am, Sir, with respect and friendship, yours,

J. A.

TO THE HONORABLE JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

MONTICELLO, November 1, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 4th of October was not received here until the 20th, having been sixteen

days on its passage; since which unavoidable avocations have made this the first moment it has been in my power to acknowledge its receipt. Of the character of M. de Pradt his political writings furnish a tolerable estimate, but not so full as you have favored me with. He is eloquent, and his pamphlet on colonies shows him ingenious. I was gratified by his *Recit Historique*, because, pretending, as all men do, to some character, and he to one of some distinction, I supposed he would not place before the world facts of glaring falsehood, on which so many living and distinguished witnesses could convict him. We, too, who are retired from the business of the world, are glad to catch a glimpse of truth, here and there as we can, to guide our path through the boundless field of fable in which we are bewildered by public prints, and even by those calling themselves histories. A word of truth to us is like the drop of water supplicated from the tip of Lazarus' finger. It is as an observation of latitude and longitude to the mariner long enveloped in clouds, for correcting the ship's way.

On the subject of weights and measures, you will have, at its threshold, to encounter the question on which Solon and Lycurgus acted differently. Shall we mould our citizens to the law, or the law to our citizens? And in solving this question their peculiar character is an element not to be neglected. Of the two only things in nature which can furnish an invariable standard, to wit, the dimensions of the

globe itself, and the time of its diurnal revolution on its axis, it is not perhaps of much importance which we adopt. That of the dimensions of the globe, preferred ultimately by the French, after first adopting the other, has been objected to from the difficulty, not to say impracticability, of the verification of their admeasurement by other nations. Except the portion of a meridian which they adopted for their operation, there is not another on the globe which fulfils the requisite conditions, to wit, of so considerable length, that length, too, divided not very unequally, by the 45th degree of latitude, and terminating at each end in the ocean. Now, this singular line lies wholly in France and Spain. Besides the immensity of expense and time which a verification would always require, it cannot be undertaken by any nation without the joint consent of these two powers. France having once performed the work, and refusing, as she may, to let any other nation re-examine it, she makes herself the sole depository of the original standard for all nations; and all must send to her to obtain, and from time to time to prove their standards. To this, indeed, it may be answered that there can be no reason to doubt that the mensuration has been as accurately performed as the intervention of numerous waters, and of high ridges of craggy mountains, would admit; that all the calculations have been free of error, their coincidences faithfully reported, and that, whether in peace or war, to foes as well as friends, free access to the

original will at all times be admitted. In favor of the standard to be taken from the time employed in a revolution of the earth on its axis, it may be urged that this revolution is a matter of fact present to all the world, that its division into seconds of time is known and received by all the world, that the length of a pendulum vibrating seconds in the different circles of latitude is already known to all, and can at any time and in any place be ascertained by any nation or individual, and inferred by known laws from their own to the medium latitude of 45°, whenever any doubt may make this desirable; and that this is the particular standard which has at different times been contemplated and desired[1] by the philosophers of every nation, and even by those of France, except at the particular moment when this change was suddenly proposed and adopted, and under circumstances peculiar to the history of the moment. But the cogent reason which will decide the fate of whatever you report is, that England has lately adopted the reference of its measures to the pendulum. It is the mercantile part of our community which will have most to do in this innovation; it is that which having command of all the presses can make the loudest outcry, and you know their identification with English regulations, practices, and prejudices. It is from this identification

[1] If conforming to this desire of other nations, we adopt the second pendulum, $\frac{8}{10}$ of that for our foot will be the same as $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{8}{10}$ of the second rod, because that rod is to the pendulum as 3 to 2. This would make our foot $\frac{1}{4}$ inch less than the present one.

alone you can hope to be permitted to adopt even the English reference to a pendulum. But the English proposition goes only to say what proportion their measures bear to the second pendulum of their own latitude, and not at all to change their unit, or to reduce into any simple order the chaos of their weights and measures. That would be innovation, and innovation there is heresy and treason. Whether the Senate meant more than this I do not know; and much doubt if more can be effected. However, in endeavors to improve our situation, we should never despair; and I sincerely wish you may be able to rally us to either standard, and to give us an unit, the aliquot part of something invariable which may be applied simply and conveniently to our measures, weights, and coins, and most especially that the decimal divisions may pervade the whole. The convenience of this in our moneyed system has been approved by all, and France has followed the example. The volume of tracts which you have noted in the library of Congress, contains everything which I had then been able to collect on this subject. You will find some details which may be of use, in two thin 4to vols., Nos. 399, 400, of chapter xxiv; the latter being a collection of sheets selected from the "*Encyclopedie Methodique*," on the weights, measures and coins of all nations, bound up together and alone; and the former a supplement by Beyerlé. Cooper's Emporium too, for May, 1812, and August, 1813, may offer something. The reports of the Com-

mittees of Parliament of 1758–9, I think you will find in Postlethwaite's Dictionary, which is also in the library, chapter 20, No. 10. That of Mechain and Delambre I have not, nor do I know who has it.

I have lately seen a book which your office ought to possess, if it has it not already, entitled "*Memoire sur la Louisiane*, par M. le Comte de Vergennes, 8vo, Paris, chez Lepetit, Jeune, 1802." It contains more in detail the proofs of the extent of Louisiana as far as the Rio Grande than I have ever before seen, and its author gives it authenticity. It has been executed with great industry and research into the French records. This reminds me of a MS. which Governor Claiborne found in a private family in Louisiana, being a journal kept, I forget by whom, but by a confidential officer of the government, proving exactly by what connivance between the agents of the Compagnie d'Occident and the Spaniards these last smuggled settlements into Louisiana as far as Assinais, Adais, etc., for the purpose of covering the contraband trade of the company. Claiborne being afraid to trust the original by mail without keeping a copy, sent it on. It arrived safe, and was deposited in the office of State. He then sent me the copy on the destruction of the office at Washington by the British, apprehending the original might be involved in that destruction. I sent the copy to Colonel Monroe, then Secretary of State, with a request to return it if the original was safe, and to keep it if not. I have heard no more of it; but will now

request of you to have search made for the original, and if safe, to return me the copy. I propose to deposit it with the Historical Committee of the Philosophical Society at Philadelphia, for safe keeping. I have no use nor wish for such a thing myself, but think it will be safer in two deposits than one. My recommendation to Colonel Monroe, was to have it printed. I have barely left myself room to express my satisfaction at your call to the important office you hold, and to tender you the assurance of my great esteem and respect.

TO P. S. DUPONCEAU.

MONTICELLO, November 7, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—A part of the information of which the expedition of Lewis and Clarke was the object, has been communicated to the world by the publication of their journal; but much and valuable matter yet remains uncommunicated. The correction of the longitudes of their map is essential to its value; to which purpose their observations of the lunar distances are to be calculated and applied. The new subjects they discovered in the vegetable, animal, and mineral departments, are to be digested and made known. The numerous vocabularies they obtained of the Indian languages are to be collated and published. Although the whole expense of the expedition was furnished by the public, and the information to be derived from it was theirs also,

yet on the return of Messrs. Lewis and Clarke, the government thought it just to leave to them any pecuniary benefit which might result from a publication of the papers, and supposed, indeed, that this would secure the best form of publication. But the property in these papers still remained in the government for the benefit of their constituents. With the measures taken by Governor Lewis for their publication, I was never acquainted. After his death, Governor Clarke put them, in the first instance, into the hands of the late Dr. Barton, from whom some of them passed to Mr. Biddle, and some again, I believe, from him to Mr. Allen. While the MS. books of journals were in the hands of Dr. Barton, I wrote to him, on behalf of Governor Lewis' family, requesting earnestly, that, as soon as these should be published, the originals might be returned, as the family wished to have them preserved. He promised in his answer that it should be faithfully done. After his death, I obtained, through the kind agency of Mr. Correa, from Mrs. Barton, three of those books, of which I knew there had been ten or twelve, having myself read them. These were all she could find. The rest, therefore, I presume, are in the hands of the other gentlemen. After the agency I had had in effecting this expedition, I thought myself authorized, and, indeed, that it would be expected of me, that I should follow up the subject, and endeavor to obtain its fruits for the public. I wrote to General Clarke, therefore, for authority to receive

the original papers. He gave it in the letters to Mr. Biddle and to myself, which I now enclose. As the custody of these papers belonged properly to the War Office, and that was vacant at the time, I have waited several months for its being filled. But the office still remaining vacant, and my distance rendering any effectual measures, by myself, impracticable, I ask the agency of your committee, within whose province I propose to place the matter, by making it the depository of the papers generally. I therefore now forward the three volumes of MS. journals in my possession, and authorize them, under General Clarke's letters, to inquire for and to receive the rest. So also the astronomical and geographical papers, those relating to zoological, botanical, and mineral subjects, with the Indian vocabularies, and statistical tables relative to the Indians. Of the astronomical and geographical papers, if the committee will be so good as to give me a statement, I will, as soon as a Secretary of War is appointed, propose to him to have made, at the public expense, the requisite calculations, to have the map corrected in its longitudes and latitudes, engraved and published on a proper scale; and I will ask from General Clarke the one he offers, with his corrections. With respect to the zoological and mineralogical papers and subjects, it would perhaps be agreeable to the Philosophical Society, to have a digest of them made, and published in their transactions or otherwise. And if it should be within the views of the Historical Commit-

tee to have the Indian vocabularies digested and published, I would add to them the remains of my collection. I had through the course of my life availed myself of every opportunity of procuring vocabularies of the languages of every tribe which either myself or my friends could have access to. They amounted to about forty, more or less perfect. But in their passage from Washington to this place, the trunk in which they were was stolen and plundered, and some fragments only of the vocabularies were recovered. Still, however, they were such as would be worth incorporation with a larger work, and shall be at the service of the Historical Committee, if they can make any use of them. Permit me to request the return of General Clarke's letter, and to add assurances of my respect and esteem.

P. S. With the volumes of MS. journal, Mrs. Barton delivered one by mistake I suppose, which seems to have been the journal of some botanist. I presume it was the property of Dr. Barton, and therefore forward it to you to be returned to Mrs. Barton.

TO J. CORREA DE SERRA.

POPLAR FOREST, November 25, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—I am highly gratified by the interest you take in our Central College, and the more so as it may possibly become an inducement to pass more of

your time with us. It is even said you had thought of engaging a house in its neighborhood. But why another house? Is not one enough? and especially one whose inhabitants are made so happy by your becoming their inmate? When you shall have a wife and family wishing to be to themselves, then the question of another house may be taken *ad referendum*. I wish Dr. Cooper could have the same partialities. He seems to have misunderstood my last letter; in the former I had spoken of opening our Physical School in the spring of '19, but learning that that delay might render his engagement uncertain, the visitors determined to force their preparations so as to receive him by midsummer next, and so my letter stated. In one I now write, I recall his attention to that circumstance. But his decision will no doubt be governed by the result of the proposition, to permit the medical students of Philadelphia to attend him. I can never regret any circumstance which may add to his well-being, for I most sincerely wish him well. That himself and Mrs. Cooper will be happier in the society of Philadelphia, cannot be doubted. It would be flattering enough to us to be his second choice. I find from his information that we are not to expect to obtain in this country either a classical or mathematical professor of the first order; and as our institution cannot be raised above the common herd of academies, colleges, etc., already scattered over our country, but by supereminent professors, we have determined to

accept of no mediocrity, and to seek in Europe for what is eminent. We shall go to Edinburgh in preference, because of the advantage to students of receiving communications in their native tongue, and because peculiar and personal circumstances will enable us to interest Dugald Stewart and Professor Leslie, of that College, in procuring us subjects of real worth and eminence. I put off writing to them for a classical and mathematical professor only until I see what our legislature, which meets on Monday next, is disposed to do, either on the question singly of adopting our college for their university, or on that of entering at once on a general system of instruction, for which they have for some time been preparing. For this last purpose I have sketched, and put into the hands of a member a bill, delineating a practicable plan, entirely within the means they already have on hand, destined to this object. My bill proposes, 1. Elementary schools in every county, which shall place every householder within three miles of a school. 2. District colleges, which shall place every father within a day's ride of a college where he may dispose of his son. 3. An university in a healthy and central situation, with the offer of the lands, buildings, and funds of the Central College, if they will accept that place for their establishment. In the first will be taught reading, writing, common arithmetic, and general notions of geography. In the second, ancient and modern languages, geography fully, a higher degree of numerical arithmetic, men-

suration, and the elementary principles of navigation. In the third, all the useful sciences in their highest degree. To all of which is added a selection from the elementary schools of subjects of the most promising genius, whose parents are too poor to give them further education, to be carried at the public expense through the colleges and university. The object is to bring into action that mass of talents which lies buried in poverty in every country, for want of the means of development, and thus give activity to a mass of mind, which, in proportion to our population, shall be the double or treble of what it is in most countries. The expense of the elementary schools for every county, is proposed to be levied on the wealth of the county, and all children rich and poor to be educated at these three years gratis. The expense of the colleges and university, admitting two professors to each of the former, and ten to the latter, can be completely and permanently established with a sum of five hundred thousand dollars, in addition to the present funds of our Central College. Our literary fund has already on hand, and appropriated to these purposes, a sum of seven hundred thousand dollars, and that increasing yearly. This is in fact and substance the plan I proposed in a bill forty years ago, but accommodated to the circumstances of this, instead of that day. I derive my present hopes that it may now be adopted, from the fact that the House of Representatives, at their last session, passed a bill, less practicable and boundlessly

expensive, and therefore alone rejected by the Senate, and printed for public consideration and amendment. Mine, after all, may be an Utopian dream, but being innocent, I have thought I might indulge in it till I go to the land of dreams, and sleep there with the dreamers of all past and future times.

I have taken measures to obtain the crested turkey, and will endeavor to perpetuate that beautiful and singular characteristic, and shall be not less earnest in endeavors to raise the Moronnier. God bless you, and preserve you long in life and health, until wearied with delighting your kindred spirits here, you may wish to encounter the great problem, untried by the living, unreported by the dead.

TO P. S. DUPONCEAU.

MONTICELLO, December 30, 1817.

DEAR SIR,—An absence of six weeks has occasioned your letters of the 5th and 11th inst., to lie thus long unacknowledged. After I had sent off the two other Westover MSS. I received a third of the same journal. On perusing it I am not sensible by memory, of anything not contained in the former, except eight pages of a preliminary account of the abridgment of our limits by successive charters to other colonies. I suppose this to be a copy of the largest of the other two, entered fair in a folio volume, with other documents relating to the government of Virginia. It is bound in vellum, and, by the arms

pasted in it, seems to have been intended for the shelves of the author's library. As this journal is complete it might enable us to supply the hiatuses of the other copies.

I now send you the remains of my Indian vocabularies, some of which are perfect. I send with them the fragments of my digest of them, which were gathered up on the banks of the river where they had been strewed by the plunderers of the trunk in which they were. These will merely show the arrangement I had given the vocabularies, according to their affinities and degrees of resemblance or dissimilitude.

If you can recover Capt. Lewis' collection, they will make an important addition, for there was no part of his instructions which he executed more fully or carefully, never meeting with a single Indian of a new tribe, without making his vocabulary the first object. What Professor Adelung mentions of the Empress Catharine's having procured many vocabularies of our Indians, is correct. She applied to M. de La Fayette, who, through the aid of General Washington, obtained several; but I never learnt of what particular tribes. The great works of Pallas being rare, I will mention that there are two editions of it, the one in two volumes, the other in four volumes 4to, in the library I ceded to Congress, which may be consulted. But the Professor's account of the supposed Mexican MS. is quite erroneous, nor can I conceive through whom he can have received his information. It has probably been founded on an

imperfect knowledge of the following fact: Soon after the acquisition of Louisiana, Governor Claiborne found, in a private family there, a MS. journal kept, (I forget by whom,) but by a confidential officer of the French government, proving exactly by what connivance between the agents of the Compagnie d'Occident, and the Spaniards, these last smuggled settlements into Louisiana, as far as Assinais, Adias, etc., for the purpose of covering the contraband trade of the company. Claiborne, being afraid to trust the original by mail, without keeping a copy, sent it on after being copied. It arrived safe, and was deposited by me in the office of State. He then sent me the copy, on the destruction of the office at Washington by the British; apprehending the original might be involved in that destruction, I sent the copy to Colonel Monroe, then Secretary of State, with a request to return it, if the original was safe, and to keep it, if not. I have heard no more of it. My intention was, and is, if it is returned to me, to deposit it with your committee for safe keeping or publication. While on the subject of Louisiana, I have thought I had better commit to you also an historical memoir of my own respecting the important question of its limits. When we first made the purchase we knew little of its extent, having never before been interested to inquire into it. Possessing, then, in my library, everything respecting America which I had been able to collect by unremitting researches, during my residence in Europe, particu-

larly and generally through my life, I availed myself of the leisure of my succeeding autumnal recess from Washington, to bring together everything which my collection furnished on the subject of its boundary. The result was the memoir I now send you, copies of which were furnished to our ministers at Paris and Madrid, for their information as to the extent of territory claimed under our purchase. The New Orleans MS. afterwards discovered, furnished some valuable supplementary proofs of title.

I defer writing to the Secretary of War respecting the observations of longitude and latitude by Capt. Lewis, until I learn from you whether they are recovered, and whether they are so complete as to be susceptible of satisfactory calculation. I salute you with great respect and esteem.

TO WILLIAM WIRT.

MONTICELLO, January 5, 1818.

I have first to thank you, dear Sir, for the copy of your late work which you have been so kind as to send me, and then to render you double congratulations, first, on the general applause it has so justly received, and next on the public testimony of esteem for its author, manifested by your late call to the executive councils of the nation. All this I do heartily, and then proceed to a case of business on which you will have to advise the government on the threshold of your office. You have seen the death

of General Kosciusko announced in the papers in such a way as not to be doubted. He had in the funds of the United States a very considerable sum of money, on the interest of which he depended for subsistence. On his leaving the United States, in 1798, he placed it under my direction by a power of attorney, which I executed entirely through Mr. Barnes, who regularly remitted his interest. But he left also in my hands an autograph will, disposing of his funds in a particular course of charity, and making me his executor. The question the government will ask of you, and which I therefore ask, is in what court must this will be proved, and my qualification as executor be received, to justify the United States in placing these funds under the trust? This is to be executed wholly in this State, and will occupy so long a course of time beyond what I can expect to live, that I think to propose to place it under the Court of Chancery. The place of probate generally follows the residence of the testator. That was in a foreign country in the present case. Sometimes the *bona notabilia*. The evidences or representations of these (the certificates) are in my hands. The things represented (the money) in those of the United States. But where are the United States? Everywhere, I suppose, where they have government or property liable to the demand on payment. That is to say, in every State of the Union, in this, for example, as well as any other, strengthened by the circumstances of the deposit of the will, the residence of

the executor, and the place where the trust is to be executed. In no instance, I believe, does the mere habitation of the debtor draw to it the place of probate, and if it did, the United States are omnipresent by their functionaries, as well as property in every State of the Union. I am led by these considerations to suppose our district or general court competent to the object; but you know best, and by your advice, sanctioned by the Secretary of the Treasury, I shall act. I write to the Secretary on this subject. If our district court will do, I can attend it personally; if the general court only be competent, I am in hopes it will find means of dispensing with my personal attendance. I salute you with affectionate esteem and respect.

TO DR. BENJAMIN WATERHOUSE.

MONTICELLO, March 3, 1818.

DEAR SIR,—I have just received your favor of February 20th, in which you observe that Mr. Wirt, on page 47 of his Life of Patrick Henry, quotes me as saying that "Mr. Henry certainly gave the first impulse to the ball of revolution." I well recollect to have used some such expression in a letter to him, and am tolerably certain that our own State being the subject under contemplation, I must have used it with respect to that only. Whether he has given it a more general aspect I cannot say, as the passage is not in the page you quote, nor, after

thumbing over much of the book, have I been able to find it.[1] In page 417 there is something like it, but not the exact expression, and even there it may be doubted whether Mr. Wirt had his eye on Virginia alone, or on all the colonies. But the question, who commenced the Revolution? is as difficult as that of the first inventors of a thousand good things. For example, who first discovered the principle of gravity? Not Newton; for Galileo, who died the year that Newton was born, had measured its force in the descent of gravid bodies. Who invented the Lavoiserian chemistry? The English say Dr. Black, by the preparatory discovery of latent heat. Who invented the steamboat? Was it Gerbert, the Marquis of Worcester, Newcomen, Savary, Papin, Fitch, Fulton? The fact is, that one new idea leads to another, that to a third, and so on through a course of time until some one, with whom no one of these ideas was original, combines all together, and produces what is justly called a new invention. I suppose it would be as difficult to trace our Revolution to its first embryo. We do not know how long it was hatching in the British Cabinet before they ventured to make the first of the experiments which were to develop it in the end and to produce complete parliamentary supremacy. Those you mention in Massachusetts as preceding the stamp act, might be the first visible symptoms of that design. The proposition of that act in 1764, was

[1] It was found page 41.

the first here. Your opposition, therefore, preceded ours, as occasion was sooner given there than here, and the truth, I suppose, is, that the opposition in every colony began whenever the encroachment was presented to it. This question of priority is as the inquiry would be who first, of the three hundred Spartans, offered his name to Leonidas? I shall be happy to see justice done to the merits of all, by the unexceptionable umpirage of date and facts, and especially from the pen which is proposed to be employed in it.

I rejoice, indeed, to learn from you that Mr. Adams retains the strength of his memory, his faculties, his cheerfulness, and even his epistolary industry. This last is gone from me. The aversion has been growing on me for a considerable time, and now, near the close of seventy-five, is become almost insuperable. I am much debilitated in body, and my memory sensibly on the wane. Still, however, I enjoy good health and spirits, and am as industrious a reader as when a student at college. Not of newspapers. These I have discarded. I relinquish, as I ought to do, all intermeddling with public affairs, committing myself cheerfully to the watch and care of those for whom, in my turn, I have watched and cared. When I contemplate the immense advances in science and discoveries in the arts which have been made within the period of my life, I look forward with confidence to equal advances by the present generation, and have no doubt they will consequently be as much

wiser than we have been as we than our fathers were, and they than the burners of witches. Even the metaphysical contest, which you so pleasantly described to me in a former letter, will probably end in improvement, by clearing the mind of Platonic mysticism and unintelligible jargon. Although age is taking from me the power of communicating by letter with my friends as industriously as heretofore, I shall still claim with them the same place they will ever hold in my affections, and on this ground I, with sincerity and pleasure, assure you of my great esteem and respect.

TO NATHANIEL BURWELL, ESQ.

MONTICELLO, March 14, 1818.

DEAR SIR,—Your letter of February 17th found me suffering under an attack of rheumatism, which has but now left me at sufficient ease to attend to the letters I have received. A plan of female education has never been a subject of systematic contemplation with me. It has occupied my attention so far only as the education of my own daughters occasionally required. Considering that they would be placed in a country situation, where little aid could be obtained from abroad, I thought it essential to give them a solid education, which might enable them, when become mothers, to educate their own daughters, and even to direct the course for sons, should their fathers be lost, or incapable, or inatten-

tive. My surviving daughter accordingly, the mother of many daughters as well as sons, has made their education the object of her life, and being a better judge of the practical part than myself, it is with her aid and that of one of her élèves, that I shall subjoin a catalogue of the books for such a course of reading as we have practiced.

A great obstacle to good education is the inordinate passion prevalent for novels, and the time lost in that reading which should be instructively employed. When this poison infects the mind, it destroys its tone and revolts it against wholesome reading. Reason and fact, plain and unadorned, are rejected. Nothing can engage attention unless dressed in all the figments of fancy, and nothing so bedecked comes amiss. The result is a bloated imagination, sickly judgment, and disgust towards all the real businesses of life. This mass of trash, however, is not without some distinction; some few modelling their narratives, although fictitious, on the incidents of real life, have been able to make them interesting and useful vehicles of a sound morality. Such, I think, are Marmontel's new moral tales, but not his old ones, which are really immoral. Such are the writings of Miss Edgeworth, and some of those of Madame Genlis. For a like reason, too, much poetry should not be indulged. Some is useful for forming style and taste. Pope, Dryden, Thompson, Shakspeare, and of the French, Molière, Racine, the Corneilles, may be read with pleasure and improvement.

The French language, become that of the general intercourse of nations, and from their extraordinary advances, now the depository of all science, is an indispensable part of education for both sexes. In the subjoined catalogue, therefore, I have placed the books of both languages indifferently, according as the one or the other offers what is best.

The ornaments too, and the amusements of life, are entitled to their portion of attention. These, for a female, are dancing, drawing, and music. The first is a healthy exercise, elegant and very attractive for young people. Every affectionate parent would be pleased to see his daughter qualified to participate with her companions, and without awkwardness at least, in the circles of festivity, of which she occasionally becomes a part. It is a necessary accomplishment, therefore, although of short use; for the French rule is wise, that no lady dances after marriage. This is founded in solid physical reasons, gestation and nursing leaving little time to a married lady when this exercise can be either safe or innocent. Drawing is thought less of in this country than in Europe. It is an innocent and engaging amusement, often useful, and a qualification not to be neglected in one who is to become a mother and an instructor. Music is invaluable where a person has an ear. Where they have not, it should not be attempted. It furnishes a delightful recreation for the hours of respite from the cares of the day, and lasts us through life. The taste of this country, too, calls for this

accomplishment more strongly than for either of the others.

I need say nothing of household economy, in which the mothers of our country are generally skilled, and generally careful to instruct their daughters. We all know its value, and that diligence and dexterity in all its processes are inestimable treasures. The order and economy of a house are as honorable to the mistress as those of the farm to the master, and if either be neglected, ruin follows, and children destitute of the means of living.

This, Sir, is offered as a summary sketch on a subject on which I have not thought much. It probably contains nothing but what has already occurred to yourself, and claims your acceptance on no other ground than as a testimony of my respect for your wishes, and of my great esteem and respect.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

MONTICELLO, May 17, 1818.

DEAR SIR,—I was so unfortunate as not to receive from Mr. Holly's own hand your favor of January the 28th, being then at my other home. He dined only with my family, and left them with an impression which has filled me with regret that I did not partake of the pleasure his visit gave them. I am glad he is gone to Kentucky. Rational Christianity will thrive more rapidly there than here. They are freer from prejudices than we are, and bolder in

grasping at truth. The time is not distant, though neither you nor I shall see it, when we shall be but a secondary people to them. Our greediness for wealth, and fantastical expense, have degraded, and will degrade, the minds of our maritime citizens. These are the peculiar vices of commerce.

I had been long without hearing *from* you, but I had heard *of* you through a letter from Doctor Waterhouse. He wrote to reclaim against an expression of Mr. Wirt's, as to the commencement of motion in the revolutionary ball. The lawyers say that words are always to be expounded *secundum subjectam materiem*, which, in Mr. Wirt's case, was Virginia. It would, moreover, be as difficult to say at what moment the Revolution began, and what incident set it in motion, as to fix the moment that the embryo becomes an animal, or the act which gives him a beginning. But the most agreeable part of his letter was that which informed me of your health, your activity, and strength of memory; and the most wonderful, that which assured me that you retained your industry and promptness in epistolary correspondence. Here you have entire advantage over me. My repugnance to the writing-table becomes daily and hourly more deadly and insurmountable. In place of this has come on a canine appetite for reading. And I indulge it, because I see in it a relief against the *tædium senectutis;* a lamp to lighten my path through the dreary wilderness of time before me, whose bourne I see not. Losing

daily all interest in the things around us, something else is necessary to fill the void. With me it is reading, which occupies the mind without the labor of producing ideas from my own stock.

I enter into all your doubts as to the event of the revolution of South America. They will succeed against Spain. But the dangerous enemy is within their own breasts. Ignorance and superstition will chain their minds and bodies under religious and military despotism. I do believe it would be better for them to obtain freedom by degrees only; because that would by degrees bring on light and information, and qualify them to take charge of themselves understandingly; with more certainty, if in the meantime, under so much control as may keep them at peace with one another. Surely, it is our duty to wish them independence and self-government, because they wish it themselves, and they have the right, and we none, to choose for themselves; and I wish, moreover, that our ideas may be erroneous, and theirs prove well founded. But these are speculations, my friend, which we may as well deliver over to those who are to see their development. We shall only be lookers on, from the clouds above, as now we look down on the labors, the hurry and bustle of the ants and bees. Perhaps in that supermundane region, we may be amused with seeing the fallacy of our own guesses, and even the nothingness of those labors which have filled and agitated our own time here.

En attend affections to Mrs. Adams
and yourself oth cordially.

TO M. A. JULLIEN.

MONTICELLO, July 23, 1818.

SIR,—Your favor of March 30th, 1817, came to my hands on the 1st of March, 1818. While the statement it contained of the many instances of your attention in sending to me your different writings was truly flattering, it was equally mortifying to perceive that two only of the eight it enumerates, had ever come to my hands; and that both of my acknowledgments of these had miscarried also. Your first favor of November 5th, 1809, was received by me on the 6th of May, 1810, and was answered on the 15th of July of the same year, with an acknowledgment of the receipt of your "*Essai general d'education physique, morale et intellectuelle*," and of the high sense I entertained of its utility. I do not recollect through what channel I sent this answer, but have little doubt that it was through the office of our Secretary of State, and our minister then at the court of France.

In a letter from Mr. E. I. Dupont of August 11, 1817, I received the favor of your "*Esquisse d'un ouvrage sur l'education comparée*," which he said had been received by his father a few days before his death; and on the 9th of September, 1817, I answered his letter, in which was the following paragraph:

"I duly received the pamphlet of M. Jullien on Education, to whom I had been indebted some years before for a valuable work on the same subject. Of this I expressed to him my high estimation in a letter of thanks, which I trust he received. The present pamphlet is an additional proof of his useful assiduities on this interesting subject, which, if the condition of man is to be progressively ameliorated, as we fondly hope and believe, is to be the chief instrument in effecting it." I hoped that Mr. E. I. Dupont, in acknowledging to you the receipt of your letter to his father, would be the channel of conveying to you my thanks, as he was to me of the work for which they were rendered. Be assured, Sir, that not another scrip, either written or printed, ever came to me from you; and that I was incapable of omitting the acknowledgments they called for, and of the neglect which you have had so much reason to impute to me. I know well the uncertainty of transmissions across the Atlantic, but never before experienced such a train of them as has taken place in your favors and my acknowledgments of them. You will perceive that the letter I am now answering was eleven months on its passage to me.

The distance between the scenes of action of General Kosciusko and myself, during our Revolutionary war,—his in the military, mine in the civil department,—was such, that I could give no particulars of the part he acted in that war. But immediately on the receipt of your letter, I wrote to General Arm-

strong, who had been his companion in arms, and an aid to General Gates, with whom General Kosciusko mostly served, and requested him to give me all the details within his knowledge; informing him for whom, and for what purpose they were asked. I received, two days ago only, the paper of which the enclosed is a copy, and copied by myself, because the original is in such a handwriting as I am confident no foreigner could ever decypher. However heavily pressed by the hand of age, and unequal to the duties of punctual correspondence, of which my friends generally would have a right to complain, if the cause depended on myself, I am happy to find that in that with yourself there has been no ground of reproach. Least of all things could I have omitted any researches within my power which might do justice to the memory of General Kosciusko, the brave auxiliary of my country in its struggle for liberty, and, from the year 1797, when our particular acquaintance began, my most intimate and much beloved friend. On his last departure from the United States in 1798, he left in my hands an instrument appropriating after his death all the property he had in our public funds, the price of his military services here, to the education and emancipation of as many of the children of bondage in this country as it should be adequate to. I am now too old to undertake a business *de si longue haleine;* but I am taking measures to place it in such hands as will ensure a faithful discharge of the philanthropic inten-

tions of the donor. I learn with pleasure your continued efforts for the instruction of the future generations of men, and, believing it the only means of effectuating their rights, I wish them all possible success, and to yourself the eternal gratitude of those who will feel their benefits, and beg leave to add the assurance of my high esteem and respect.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

MONTICELLO, November 13, 1818.

The public papers, my dear friend, announce the fatal event of which your letter of October the 20th had given me ominous foreboding. Tried myself in the school of affliction, by the loss of every form of connection which can rive the human heart, I know well, and feel what you have lost, what you have suffered, are suffering, and have yet to endure. The same trials have taught me that for ills so immeasurable, time and silence are the only medicine. I will not, therefore, by useless condolences, open afresh the sluices of your grief, nor, although mingling sincerely my tears with yours, will I say a word more where words are vain, but that it is of some comfort to us both, that the term is not very distant, at which we are to deposit in the same cerement, our sorrows and suffering bodies, and to ascend in essence to an ecstatic meeting with the friends we have loved and lost, and whom we shall still love and never lose again. God bless you and support you under your heavy affliction.

TO ROBERT WALSH.

MONTICELLO, December 4, 1818.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of November the 8th has been some time received; but it is in my power to give little satisfaction as to its inquiries. Dr. Franklin had many political enemies, as every character must, which, with decision enough to have opinions, has energy and talent to give them effect on the feelings of the adversary opinion. These enmities were chiefly in Pennsylvania and Massachusetts. In the former, they were merely of the proprietary party. In the latter, they did not commence till the Revolution, and then sprung chiefly from personal animosities, which spreading by little and little, became at length of some extent. Dr. Lee was his principal calumniator, a man of much malignity, who, besides enlisting his whole family in the same hostility, was enabled, as the agent of Massachusetts with the British government, to infuse it into that State with considerable effect. Mr. Izard, the Doctor's enemy also, but from a pecuniary transaction, never countenanced these charges against him. Mr. Jay, Silas Deane, Mr. Laurens, his colleagues also, ever maintained towards him unlimited confidence and respect. That he would have waived the formal recognition of our independence, I never heard on any authority worthy notice. As to the fisheries, England was urgent to retain them exclusively, France neutral,

and I believe, that had they been ultimately made a *sine qua non*, our commissioners (Mr. Adams excepted) would have relinquished them, rather than have broken off the treaty. To Mr. Adams' perseverance alone, on that point, I have always understood we were indebted for their reservation. As to the charge of subservience to France, besides the evidence of his friendly colleagues before named, two years of my own service with him at Paris, daily visits, and the most friendly and confidential conversation, convince me it had not a shadow of foundation. He possessed the confidence of that government in the highest degree, insomuch, that it may truly be said, that they were more under his influence, than he under theirs. The fact is, that his temper was so amiable and conciliatory, his conduct so rational, never urging impossibilities, or even things unreasonably inconvenient to them, in short, so moderate and attentive to their difficulties, as well as our own, that what his enemies called subserviency, I saw was only that reasonable disposition, which, sensible that advantages are not all to be on one side, yielding what is just and liberal, is the more certain of obtaining liberality and justice. Mutual confidence produces, of course, mutual influence, and this was all which subsisted between Dr. Franklin and the government of France.

I state a few anecdotes of Dr. Franklin, within my own knowledge, too much in detail for the scale of Delaplaine's work, but which may find a *cadre* in

some of the more particular views you contemplate. My health is in a great measure restored, and our family join with me in affectionate recollections and assurances of respect.

TO MONSIEUR DE NEUVILLE.

MONTICELLO, December 13, 1818.

I thank your Excellency for the notice with which your letters favor me, of the liberation of France from the occupation of the allied powers. To no one, not a native, will it give more pleasure. In the desolation of Europe, to gratify the atrocious caprices of Bonaparte, France sinned much; but she has suffered more than retaliation. Once relieved from the incubus of her late oppression, she will rise like a giant from her slumbers. Her soil and climate, her arts and eminent sciences, her central position and free Constitution, will soon make her greater than she ever was. And I am a false prophet, if she does not at some future day, remind of her sufferings those who have inflicted them the most eagerly. I hope, however, she will be quiet for the present, and risk no new troubles. Her Constitution, as now amended, gives as much of self-government as perhaps she can yet bear, and will give more, when the habits of order shall have prepared her to receive more. Besides the gratitude which every American owes her, as our sole ally during the War of Independence, I am additionally

affectioned by the friendships I contracted there, by the good dispositions I witnessed, and by the courtesies I received.

I rejoice, as a moralist, at the prospect of a reduction of the duties on wine, by our national legislature. It is an error to view a tax on that liquor as merely a tax on the rich. It is a prohibition of its use to the middling class of our citizens, and a condemnation of them to the poison of whiskey, which is desolating their houses. No nation is drunken where wine is cheap; and none sober, where the dearness of wine substitutes ardent spirits as the common beverage. It is, in truth, the only antidote to the bane of whiskey. Fix but the duty at the rate of other merchandise, and we can drink wine here as cheap as we do grog; and who will not prefer it? Its extended use will carry health and comfort to a much enlarged circle. Every one in easy circumstances (as the bulk of our citizens are) will prefer it to the poison to which they are now driven by their government. And the treasury itself will find that a penny apiece from a dozen, is more than a groat from a single one. This reformation, however, will require time. Our merchants know nothing of the infinite variety of cheap and good wines to be had in Europe; and particularly in France, in Italy, and the Grecian islands; as they know little also, of the variety of excellent manufactures and comforts to be had anywhere out of England. Nor will these things be known, nor of course called for here, until the native

merchants of those countries, to whom they are known, shall bring them forward, exhibit and vend them at the moderate profits they can afford. This alone will procure them familiarity with us, and the preference they merit in competition with corresponding articles now in use.

Our family renew with pleasure their recollections of your kind visit to Monticello, and join me in tendering sincere assurances of the gratification it afforded us, and of our great esteem and respectful consideration.

TO NATHANIEL MACON, ESQ.

MONTICELLO, January 12, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—The problem you had wished to propose to me was one which I could not have solved; for I knew nothing of the facts. I read no newspaper now but Ritchie's, and in that chiefly the advertisements, for they contain the only truths to be relied on in a newspaper. I feel a much greater interest in knowing what has passed two or three thousand years ago, than in what is now passing. I read nothing, therefore, but of the heroes of Troy, of the wars of Lacedæmon and Athens, of Pompey and Cæsar, and of Augustus too, the Bonaparte and parricide scoundrel of that day. I have had, and still have, such entire confidence in the late and present Presidents, that I willingly put both soul and body into their pockets. While such men as your-

self and your worthy colleagues of the legislature, and such characters as compose the executive administration, are watching for us all, I slumber without fear, and review in my dreams the visions of antiquity. There is, indeed, one evil which awakens me at times, because it jostles me at every turn. It is that we have now no measure of value. I am asked eighteen dollars for a yard of broadcloth, which, when we had dollars, I used to get for eighteen shillings; from this I can only understand that a dollar is now worth but two inches of broadcloth, but broadcloth is no standard of measure or value. I do not know, therefore, whereabouts I stand in the scale of property, nor what to ask, or what to give for it. I saw, indeed, the like machinery in action in the years '80 and '81, and without dissatisfaction; because in wearing out, it was working out our salvation. But I see nothing in this renewal of the game of "Robin's alive" but a general demoralization of the nation, a filching from industry its honest earnings, wherewith to build up palaces, and raise gambling stock for swindlers and shavers, who are to close, too, their career of piracies by fraudulent bankruptcies. My dependence for a remedy, however, is with the wisdom which grows with time and suffering. Whether the succeeding generation is to be more virtuous than their predecessors, I cannot say; but I am sure they will have more worldly wisdom, and enough, I hope, to know that honesty is the first chapter in the book of wisdom. I have

made a great exertion to write you thus much; my antipathy to taking up a pen being so intense that I have never given you a stronger proof, than in the effort of writing a letter, how much I value you, and of the superlative respect and friendship with which I salute you.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

MONTICELLO, March 21, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—I am indebted to you for Mr. Bowditch's very learned mathematical papers, the calculations of which are not for every reader, although their results are readily enough understood. One of these impairs the confidence I had reposed in La Place's demonstration, that the eccentricities of the planets of our system could oscillate only within narrow limits, and therefore could authorize no inference that the system must, by its own laws, come one day to an end. This would have left the question one of infinitude, at both ends of the line of time, clear of physical authority.

Mr. Pickering's pamphlet on the pronunciation of the Greek, for which I am indebted to you also, I have read with great pleasure. Early in life, the idea occurred to me that the people now inhabiting the ancient seats of the Greeks and Romans, although their languages in the intermediate ages had suffered great changes, and especially in the declension of their nouns, and in the terminations of their words

generally, yet having preserved the body of the word radically the same, so they would preserve more of its pronunciation. That at least it was probable that a pronunciation, handed down by tradition, would retain, as the words themselves do, more of the original than that of any other people whose language has no affinity to that original. For this reason I learnt, and have used the Italian pronunciation of the Latin. But that of the modern Greeks I had no opportunity of learning until I went to Paris. There I became acquainted with two learned Greeks, Count Carberri and Mr. Paradise, and with a lady, a native Greek, the daughter of Baron de Tott, who did not understand the ancient language. Carberri and Paradise spoke it. From these instructors I learnt the modern pronunciation, and *in general* trusted to its orthodoxy. I say, *in general*, because sound being more fugitive than the written letter, we must, after such a lapse of time, presume in it some degeneracies, as we see there are in the written words. We may not, indeed, be able to put our finger on them confidently, yet neither are they entirely beyond the reach of all indication. For example, in a language so remarkable for the euphony of its sounds, if that euphony is preserved in particular combinations of its letters, by an adherence to the powers ordinarily ascribed to them, and is destroyed by a change of these powers, and the sound of the word thereby rendered harsh, inharmonious, and inidiomatical, here we may presume some de-

generacy has taken place. While, therefore, I gave in to the modern pronunciation generally, I have presumed, as an instance of degeneracy, their ascribing the same sound to the six letters, or combinations of letters, ε, ι, υ, αι, οι, υι, to all of which they give the sound of our double *e* in the word *meet*. This useless equivalence of three vowels and three diphthongs, did not probably exist among the ancient Greeks; and the less probably as, while this single sound, *ee*, is overcharged by so many different representative characters, the sounds we usually give to these characters and combinations would be left without any representative signs. This would imply either that they had not these sounds in their language, or no signs for their expression. Probability appears to me, therefore, against the practice of the modern Greeks of giving the same sound to all these different representatives, and to be in favor of that of foreign nations, who, adopting the Roman characters, have assimilated to them, in a considerable degree, the powers of the corresponding Greek letters. I have, accordingly, excepted this in my adoption of the modern pronunciation. I have been more doubtful in the use of the αυ, ευ, ηυ, ωυ, sounding the υ, upsilon, as our *f* or *v*, because I find traces of that power of υ, or of *v*, in some modern languages. To go no further than our own, we have it in *laugh*, *cough*, *trough*, *enough*. The county of Louisa, adjacent to that in which I live, was, when I was a boy, universally pronounced Lovisa. That it is not the

gh which gives the sound of *f* or *v*, in these words, is proved by the orthography of *plough*, *trough*, *thought*, *fraught*, *caught*. The modern Greeks themselves, too, giving up ν, upsilon, in ordinary the sound of our *ee*, strengthens the presumption that its anomalous sound of *f* or *v*, is a corruption. The same may be inferred from the cacophony of ελαφνε (elavne) for ελαννε, (elawne,) Αχιλλεφς (Achillefs) for Αχιλλαις, (Achilleise,) εφς (eves) for εὗς, (eeuse,) οφκ (ovk) for ϰκ, (ouk,) ωφτος (ovetos) for ωὗτος, (o-u-tos,) Ζεφς (zevs) for Ζευς, (zese,) of which all nations have made their Jupiter; and the uselessness of the υ in ευφωνια, which would otherwise have been spelt εφωνια. I therefore except this also from what I consider as approvable pronunciation.

Against reading Greek by accent, instead of quantity, as Mr. Ciceitira proposes, I raise both my hands. What becomes of the sublime measure of Homer, the full sounding rhythm of Demosthenes, if, abandoning quantity, you chop it up by accent? What ear can hesitate in its choice between the two following rhythms?

"Τὸν, δ'απαμειβὸμενος προσεφὴ πόδας ωκὺς Αχιλλευς,

and,

Τον δ'απμειβομενός προσεφὴ ποδας Αχίλλευς,"

the latter noted according to prosody, the former by accent, and dislocating our teeth in its utterance; every syllable of it, except the first and last, being pronounced against quantity. And what becomes of the art of prosody? Is that perfect coincidence of

its rules with the structure of their verse, merely accidental? or was it of design, and yet for no use?

On the whole, I rejoice that this subject is taken up among us, and that it is in so able hands as those of Mr. Pickering. Should he ultimately establish the modern pronunciation of the letters without any exception, I shall think it a great step gained, and giving up my exceptions, shall willingly rally to him; and as he has promised us another paper on the question whether we shall read by quantity or by accent, I can confidently trust it to the correctness of his learning and judgment. Of the origin of accentuation, I have never seen satisfactory proofs. But I have generally supposed the accents were intended to direct the inflections and modulations of the voice; but not to affect the quantity of the syllables. You did not expect, I am sure, to draw on yourself so long a disquisition on letters and sounds, nor did I intend it, but the subject ran before me, and yet I have dropped much of it by the way.

I am delighted with your high approbation of Mr. Tracy's book. The evils of this deluge of paper money are not to be removed, until our citizens are generally and radically instructed in their cause and consequences, and silence by their authority the interested clamors and sophistry of speculating, shaving, and banking institutions. Till then we must be content to return, *quoad hoc*, to the savage state, to recur to barter in the exchange of our property, for want of a stable, common measure of value,

that now in use being less fixed than the beads and wampum of the Indian, and to deliver up our citizens, their property and their labor, passive victims to the swindling tricks of bankers and mountebankers. If I had your permisson to put your letter into the hands of the editor, (Milligan,) with or without any verbal alterations you might choose, it would ensure the general circulation, which my prospectus and prefatory letter will less effectually recommend. There is nothing in the book, of mine, but these two articles, and the note on taxation in page 202. I never knew who the translator was; but I thought him some one who understood neither French nor English; and probably a Caledonian, from the number of Scotticisms I found in his MS. The innumerable corrections in that, cost me more labor than would have done a translation of the whole *de novo;* and made at last but an inelegant although faithful version of the sense of the author. *Dios guarde á V. S. muchos años.*

TO DOCTOR VINE UTLEY.

MONTICELLO, March 21, 1819.

SIR,—Your letter of February the 18th came to hand on the 1st instant; and the request of the history of my physical habits would have puzzled me not a little, had it not been for the model with which you accompanied it, of Doctor Rush's answer to a similar inquiry. I live so much like other people,

that I might refer to ordinary life as the history of my own. Like my friend the Doctor, I have lived temperately, eating little animal food, and that not as an aliment, so much as a condiment for the vegetables, which constitute my principal diet. I double however, the Doctor's glass and a half of wine, and even treble it with a friend; but halve its effects by drinking the weak wines only. The ardent wines I cannot drink, nor do I use ardent spirits in any form. Malt liquors and cider are my table drinks, and my breakfast, like that also of my friend, is of tea and coffee. I have been blest with organs of digestion which accept and concoct, without ever murmuring, whatever the palate chooses to consign to them, and I have not yet lost a tooth by age. I was a hard student until I entered on the business of life, the duties of which leave no idle time to those disposed to fulfil them; and now, retired, and at the age of seventy-six, I am again a hard student. Indeed, my fondness for reading and study revolts me from the drudgery of letter-writing. And a stiff wrist, the consequence of an early dislocation, makes writing both slow and painful. I am not so regular in my sleep as the Doctor says he was, devoting to it from five to eight hours, according as my company or the book I am reading interests me; and I never go to bed without an hour, or half hour's previous reading of something moral, whereon to ruminate in the intervals of sleep. But whether I retire to bed early or late, I rise with the sun. I use spectacles at

night, but not necessarily in the day, unless in reading small print. My hearing is distinct in particular conversation, but confused when several voices cross each other, which unfits me for the society of the table. I have been more fortunate than my friend in the article of health. So free from catarrhs that I have not had one, (in the breast, I mean) on an average of eight or ten years through life. I ascribe this exemption partly to the habit of bathing my feet in cold water every morning, for sixty years past. A fever of more than twenty-four hours I have not had above two or three times in my life. A periodical headache has afflicted me occasionally, once, perhaps, in six or eight years, for two or three weeks at a time, which seems now to have left me; and except on a late occasion of indisposition, I enjoy good health; too feeble, indeed, to walk much, but riding without fatigue six or eight miles a day, and sometimes thirty or forty. I may end these egotisms, therefore, as I began, by saying that my life has been so much like that of other people, that I might say with Horace, to every one "*nomine mutato, narratur fabula de te.*" I must not end, however, without due thanks for the kind sentiments of regard you are so good as to express towards myself; and with my acknowledgments for these, be pleased to accept the assurances of my respect and esteem.

TO HORATIO G. SPAFFORD.

MONTICELLO, May 11, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—The interest on the late derangement of my health which was so kindly expressed by many, could not but be gratifying to me, as much as it manifested a sentiment that I had not been merely an useless cypher of society. Yet a decline of health at the age of 76, was naturally to be expected, and is a warning of an event which cannot be distant, and whose approach I contemplate with little concern; for indeed, in no circumstance has nature been kinder to us, than in the soft gradations by which she prepares us to part willingly with what we are not destined always to retain. First one faculty is withdrawn and then another, sight, hearing, memory, affections, and friends, filched one by one, till we are left among strangers, the mere monuments of times, facts, and specimens of antiquity for the observation of the curious.

To your request of materials for writing my life, I know not what to say, although I have been obliged to say something to several preceding applications of the same kind. One answer indeed is obvious, that I am by decay of memory, aversion to labor, and cares more suited to my situation, unequal to such a task. Of the public transactions in which I have borne a part, I have kept no narrative with a view of history. A life of constant action leaves no time for recording. Always thinking of what is next

to be done, what has been done is dismissed, and soon obliterated from the memory. I cannot be insensible to the partiality which has induced several persons to think my life worthy of remembrance, and towards none more than yourself, who give me so much credit more than I am entitled to, as to what has been effected for the safeguard of our republican constitution. Numerous and able coadjutors have participated in these efforts, and merit equal notice. My life, in fact, has been so much like that of others, that their history is my history, with a mere difference of feature. The only valuable materials for history which I possessed, were the pamphlets of the day, carefully collected and preserved; but these passed on to Congress with my library, and are to be found in their depository. Except the Notes on Virginia, I never wrote anything but acts of office, of which I rarely kept a copy. These will all be found in the journals and gazettes of the times. There was a book published in England about 1801, or soon after, entitled "Public Characters," in which was given a sketch of my history to that period. I never knew, nor could conjecture by whom this was written; but certainly by some one pretty intimately acquainted with myself and my connections. There were a few inconsiderable errors in it, but in general it was correct. Delaplaine, in his Repository, has also given some outlines on the same subject; he sets out indeed with an error as to the county of my birth. Chesterfield, which he states as such, was the resi-

dence of my grandfather and remoter ancestors, but Albemarle was that of my father, and of my own birth and residence. Excepting this error, I remark no other but in his ascriptions of more merit than I have deserved. Girardin's History of Virginia, too, gives many particulars on the same subject, which are correct. These publications furnish all the details of facts and dates which can interest anybody, and more than I could now furnish myself from a decayed memory, or any notes I retain. While, therefore, I feel just acknowledgments for the partial selection of a subject for your employment, I am persuaded you will perceive there is too little new and worthy of public notice to devote to it a time which may be so much more usefully employed; and with a due sense of the partiality of your friendship, I salute you with assurances of the greatest esteem and respect.

TO SAMUEL ADAMS WELLS, ESQ.

MONTICELLO, May 12, 1819.

SIR,—An absence of some time at an occasional and distant residence must apologize for the delay in acknowledging the receipt of your favor of April 12th. And candor obliges me to add that it has been somewhat extended by an aversion to writing, as well as to calls on my memory for facts so much obliterated from it by time as to lessen my confidence in the traces which seem to remain. One of the inquiries

in your letter, however, may be answered without an appeal to the memory. It is that respecting the question whether committees of correspondence originated in Virginia or Massachusetts? On which you suppose me to have claimed it for Virginia. But certainly I have never made such a claim. The idea, I suppose, has been taken up from what is said in Wirt's history of Mr. Henry, p. 87, and from an inexact attention to its precise terms. It is there said "this house [of burgesses of Virginia] had the merit of originating that powerful engine of resistance, corresponding committees *between the legislatures* of the *different colonies*." That the fact as here expressed is true, your letter bears witness when it says that the resolutions of Virginia for this purpose were transmitted to the speakers of the different Assemblies, and by that of Massachusetts was laid at the next session before that body, who appointed a committee for the specified object: adding, "thus in Massachusetts there were two committees of correspondence, one chosen by the people, the other appointed by the House of Assembly; in the former, Massachusetts preceded Virginia; in the latter, Virginia preceded Massachusetts." To the origination of committees for the interior correspondence between the counties and towns of a State, I know of no claim on the part of Virginia; but certainly none was ever made by myself. I perceive, however, one error into which memory had led me. Our committee for national correspondence was appointed

in March, '73, and I well remember that going to Williamsburg in the month of June following, Peyton Randolph, our chairman, told me that messengers, bearing despatches between the two States, had crossed each other by the way; that of Virginia carrying our propositions for a committee of national correspondence, and that of Massachusetts bringing, as my memory suggested, a similar proposition. But here I must have misremembered; and the resolutions brought us from Massachusetts were probably those you mention of the town meeting of Boston, on the motion of Mr. Samuel Adams, appointing a committee "to state the rights of the colonists, and of that province in particular, and the infringements of them, to communicate them to the several towns, as the sense of the town of Boston, and to request of each town a free communication of its sentiments on this subject"? I suppose, therefore, that these resolutions were not received, as you think, while the House of Burgesses was in session in March, 1773, but a few days after we rose, and were probably what was sent by the messenger who crossed ours by the way. They may, however, have been still different. I must therefore have been mistaken in supposing and stating to Mr. Wirt, that the proposition of a committee for national correspondence was nearly simultaneous in Virginia and Massachusetts.

A similar misapprehension of another passage in Mr. Wirt's book, for which I am also quoted, has

produced a similar reclamation of the part of Massachusetts by some of her most distinguished and estimable citizens. I had been applied to by Mr. Wirt for such facts respecting Mr. Henry, as my intimacy with him, and participation in the transactions of the day, might have placed within my knowledge. I accordingly committed them to paper, and Virginia being the theatre of his action, was the only subject within my contemplation, while speaking of him. Of the resolutions and measures here, in which he had the acknowledged lead, I used the expression that "Mr. Henry certainly gave the first impulse to the ball of revolution." [Wirt, p. 41.] The expression is indeed general, and in all its extension would comprehend all the sister States. But indulgent construction would restrain it, as was really meant, to the subject matter under contemplation, which was Virginia alone; according to the rule of the lawyers, and a fair canon of general criticism, that every expression should be construed *secundum subjectam materiem*. Where the first attack was made, there must have been, of course, the first act of resistance, and that was of Massachusetts. Our first overt act of war was Mr. Henry's embodying a force of militia from several counties, regularly armed and organized, marching them in military array, and making reprisal on the King's treasury at the seat of government for the public powder taken away by his Governor. This was on the last days of April, 1775. Your formal battle of Lexington was

ten or twelve days before that, which greatly overshadowed in importance, as it preceded in time our little affray, which merely amounted to a levying of arms against the King, and very possibly you had had military affrays before the regular battle of Lexington.

These explanations will, I hope, assure you, Sir, that so far as either facts or opinions have been truly quoted from me, they have never been meant to intercept the just fame of Massachusetts, for the promptitude and perseverance of her early resistance. We willingly cede to her the laud of having been (although not exclusively) "the cradle of sound principles," and if some of us believe she has deflected from them in her course, we retain full confidence in her ultimate return to them.

I will now proceed to your quotation from Mr. Galloway's statements of what passed in Congress on their declaration of independence, in which statement there is not one word of truth, and where, bearing some resemblance to truth, it is an entire perversion of it. I do not charge this on Mr. Galloway himself; his desertion having taken place long before these measures, he doubtless received his information from some of the loyal friends whom he left behind him. But as yourself, as well as others, appear embarrassed by inconsistent accounts of the proceedings on that memorable occasion, and as those who have endeavored to restore the truth have themselves committed some errors, I will give you some

extracts from a written document on that subject, for the truth of which I pledge myself to heaven and earth; having, while the question of independence was under consideration before Congress, taken written notes, in my seat, of what was passing, and reduced them to form on the final conclusion. I have now before me that paper, from which the following are extracts:

"On Friday the 7th of June, 1776, the delegates from Virginia moved, in obedience to instructions from their constituents, that the Congress should declare that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be totally dissolved; that measures should be immediately taken for procuring the assistance of foreign powers, and a confederation be formed to bind the colonies more closely together. The House being obliged to attend at that time to some other business, the proposition was referred to the next day, when the members were ordered to attend punctually at ten o'clock. Saturday, June 8th, they proceeded to take it into consideration, and referred it to a committee of the whole, into which they immediately resolved themselves, and passed that day and Monday the 10th in debating on the subject.

"It appearing in the course of these debates, that the colonies of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania,

Delaware, Maryland, and South Carolina were not yet matured for falling from the parent stem, but that they were fast advancing to that state, it was thought most prudent to wait awhile for them, and to postpone the final decision to July 1st. But that this might occasion as little delay as possible, a committee was appointed to prepare a Declaration of Independence. The committee were J. Adams, Dr. Franklin, Roger Sherman, Robert R. Livingston and myself. This was reported to the House on Friday the 28th of June, when it was read and ordered to lie on the table. On Monday the 1st of July the House resolved itself into a committee of the whole, and resumed the consideration of the original motion made by the delegates of Virginia, which being again debated through the day, was carried in the affirmative by the votes of New Hampshire, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina and Georgia. South Carolina and Pennsylvania voted against it. Delaware having but two members present, they were divided. The delegates for New York declared they were for it themselves, and were assured their constituents were for it; but that their instructions having been drawn near a twelvemonth before, when reconciliation was still the general object, they were enjoined by them to do nothing which should impede that object. They therefore thought themselves not justifiable in voting on either side, and asked leave to withdraw from the question,

which was given them. The committee rose and reported their resolution to the House. Mr. Rutledge of South Carolina, then requested the determination might be put off to the next day, as he believed his colleagues, though they disapproved of the resolution, would then join in it for the sake of unanimity. The ultimate question whether the House would agree to the resolution of the committee was accordingly postponed to the next day, when it was again moved, and South Carolina concurred in voting for it; in the meantime a third member had come post from the Delaware counties, and turned the vote of that colony in favor of the resolution. Members of a different sentiment attending that morning from Pennsylvania also, their vote was changed; so that the whole twelve colonies, who were authorized to vote at all, gave their votes for it; and within a few days, [July 9th,] the convention of New York approved of it, and thus supplied the void occasioned by the withdrawing of their delegates from the vote." [Be careful to observe that this vacillation and vote was on the original motion of the 7th of June by the Virginia delegates, that Congress should declare the colonies independent.]

"Congress proceeded the same day to consider the Declaration of Independence, which has been reported and laid on the table the Friday preceding, and on Monday referred to a committee of the whole. The pusillanimous idea that we had friends in England worth keeping terms with, still haunted the

minds of many. For this reason those passages which conveyed censures on the people of England were struck out, lest they give them offence. The debates having taken up the greater parts of the 2d, 3d and 4th days of July, were, in the evening of the last, closed. The Declaration was reported by the committee, agreed to by the House, and signed by every member present except Mr. Dickinson." So far my notes.

Governor McKean, in his letter to McCorkle of July 16th, 1817, has thrown some lights on the transactions of that day, but trusting to his memory chiefly at an age when our memories are not to be trusted, he has confounded two questions, and ascribed proceedings to one which belonged to the other. These two questions were, 1. The Virginia motion of June 7th to declare independence, and 2. The actual Declaration, its matter and form. Thus he states the question on the Declaration itself as decided on the 1st of July. But it was the Virginia motion which was voted on that day in committee of the whole; South Carolina, as well as Pennsylvania, then voting against it. But the ultimate decision in *the House* on the report of the committee being by request postponed to the next morning, all the States voted for it, except New York, whose vote was delayed for the reason before stated. It was not till the 2d of July that the Declaration itself was taken up, nor till the 4th that it was decided; and it was signed by every member present, except Mr. Dickinson.

The subsequent signatures of members who were not then present, and some of them not yet in office, is easily explained, if we observe who they were; to wit, that they were of New York and Pennsylvania. New York did not sign till the 15th, because it was not till the 9th, five days after the general signature, that their convention authorized them to do so. The convention of Pennsylvania, learning that it had been signed by a minority only of their delegates, named a new delegation on the 20th, leaving out Mr. Dickinson, who had refused to sign, Willing and Humphreys who had withdrawn, reappointing the three members who had signed, Morris who had not been present, and five new ones, to wit, Rush, Clymer, Smith, Taylor and Ross; and Morris and the five new members were permitted to sign, because it manifested the assent of their full delegation, and the express will of their convention, which might have been doubted on the former signature of a minority only. Why the signature of Thornton of New Hampshire was permitted so late as the 4th of November, I cannot now say; but undoubtedly for some particular reason which we should find to have been good, had it been expressed. These were the only post-signers, and you see, Sir, that there were solid reasons for receiving those of New York and Pennsylvania, and that this circumstance in no wise affects the faith of this declaratory charter of our rights, and of the rights of man.

With a view to correct errors of fact before they

become inveterate by repetition, I have stated what I find essentially material in my papers; but with that brevity which the labor of writing constrains me to use.

On the fourth particular articles of inquiry in your letter, respecting your grandfather, the venerable Samuel Adams, neither memory nor memorandums enable me to give any information. I can say that he was truly a great man, wise in council, fertile in resources, immovable in his purposes, and had, I think, a greater share than any other member, in advising and directing our measures, in the northern war especially. As a speaker he could not be compared with his living colleague and namesake, whose deep conceptions, nervous style, and undaunted firmness, made him truly our bulwark in debate. But Mr. Samuel Adams, although not of fluent elocution, was so rigorously logical, so clear in his views, abundant in good sense, and master always of his subject, that he commanded the most profound attention whenever he rose in an assembly by which the froth of declamation was heard with the most sovereign contempt. I sincerely rejoice that the record of his worth is to be undertaken by one so much disposed as you will be to hand him down fairly to that posterity for whose liberty and happiness he was so zealous a laborer.

With sentiments of sincere veneration for his memory, accept yourself this tribute to it with the assurances of my great respect.

P. S. *August 6th*, 1822. Since the date of this letter, to wit, this day, August 6th, '22, I received the new publication of the secret Journals of Congress, wherein is stated a resolution, July 19th, 1776, that the Declaration passed on the 4th be fairly engrossed on parchment, and when engrossed, be signed by every member; and another of August 2d, that being engrossed and compared at the table, was signed by the members. That is to say the copy engrossed on parchment (for durability) was signed by the members after being compared at the table with the original one, signed on paper as before stated. I add this P. S. to the copy of my letter to Mr. Wells, to prevent confounding the signature of the original with that of the copy engrossed on parchment.

TO EZRA STYLES, ESQ.

MONTICELLO, June 25, 1819.

Your favor, Sir, of the 14th, has been duly received, and with it the book you were so kind as to forward to me. For this mark of attention, be pleased to accept my thanks. The science of the human mind is curious, but is one on which I have not indulged myself in much speculation. The times in which I have lived, and the scenes in which I have been engaged, have required me to keep the mind too much in action to have leisure to study minutely its laws of action. I am therefore little qualified to

give an opinion on the comparative worth of books on that subject, and little disposed to do it on any book. Yours has brought the science within a small compass, and that is the merit of the first order; and especially with one to whom the drudgery of letter-writing often denies the leisure of reading a single page in a week. On looking over the summary of the contents of your book, it does not seem likely to bring into collision any of those sectarian differences which you suppose may exist between us. In that branch of religion which regards the moralities of life, and the duties of a social being, which teaches us to love our neighbors as ourselves, and to do good to all men, I am sure that you and I do not differ. We probably differ on the dogmas of theology, the foundation of all sectarianism, and on which no two sects dream alike; for if they did they would then be of the same. You say you are a Calvinist. I am not. I am of a sect by myself, as far as I know. I am not a Jew, and therefore do not adopt their theology, which supposes the God of infinite justice to punish the sins of the fathers upon their children, unto the third and fourth generation; and the benevolent and sublime Reformer of that religion has told us only that God is good and perfect, but has not defined Him. I am, therefore, of His theology, believing that we have neither words nor ideas adequate to that definition. And if we could all, after this example, leave the subject as undefinable, we should all be of one sect, doers of good, and

eschewers of evil. No doctrines of His lead to schism. It is the speculations of crazy theologists which have made a Babel of a religion the most moral and sublime ever preached to man, and calculated to heal, and not to create differences. These religious animosities I impute to those who call themselves His ministers, and who engraft their casuistries on the stock of His simple precepts. I am sometimes more angry with them than is authorized by the blessed charities which He preaches. To yourself I pray the acceptance of my great respect.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

MONTICELLO, July 9, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—I am in debt to you for your letters of May the 21st, 27th, and June the 22d. The first, delivered me by Mr. Greenwood, gave me the gratification of his acquaintance; and a gratification it always is, to be made acquainted with gentlemen of candor, worth, and information, as I found Mr. Greenwood to be. That, on the subject of Mr. Samuel Adams Wells, shall not be forgotten, in time and place when it can be used to his advantage.

But what has attracted my peculiar notice, is the paper from Mecklenburg county, of North Carolina, published in the Essex Register, which you were so kind as to enclose in your last, of June the 22d. And you seem to think it genuine. I believe it spurious. I deem it to be a very unjustifiable quiz, like that of

the volcano, so minutely related to us as having broken out in North Carolina, some half a dozen years ago, in that part of the country, and perhaps in that very county of Mecklenburg, for I do not remember its precise locality. If this paper be really taken from the Raleigh Register, as quoted, I wonder it should have escaped Ritchie, who culls what is good from every paper, as the bee from every flower; and the National Intelligencer, too, which is edited by a North Carolinian; and that the fire should blaze out all at once in Essex, one thousand miles from where the spark is said to have fallen. But if really taken from the Raleigh Register, who is the narrator, and is the name subscribed real, or is it as fictitious as the paper itself? It appeals, too, to an original book, which is burnt, to Mr. Alexander, who is dead, to a joint letter from Caswell, Hughes, and Hooper, all dead, to a copy sent to the dead Caswell, and another sent to Doctor Williamson, now probably dead, whose memory did not recollect, in the history he has written of North Carolina, this gigantic step of its county of Mecklenburg. Horry, too, is silent in his history of Marion, whose scene of action was the country bordering on Mecklenburg. Ramsay, Marshall, Jones, Girardin, Wirt, historians of the adjacent States, all silent. When Mr. Henry's resolutions, far short of independence, flew like lightning through every paper, and kindled both sides of the Atlantic, this flaming declaration of the same date, of the independence of Mecklenburg

county, of North Carolina, absolving it from the British allegiance, and abjuring all political connection with that nation, although sent to Congress too, is never heard of. It is not known even a twelvemonth after, when a similar proposition is first made in that body. Armed with this bold example, would not you have addressed our timid brethren in peals of thunder on their tardy fears? Would not every advocate of independence have rung the glories of Mecklenburg county in North Carolina, in the ears of the doubting Dickinson and others, who hung so heavily on us? Yet the example of independent Mecklenburg county, in North Carolina, was never once quoted. The paper speaks, too, of the continued exertions of their delegation (Caswell, Hooper, Hughes) "in the cause of liberty and independence." Now you remember as well as I do, that we had not a greater tory in Congress than Hooper; that Hughes was very wavering, sometimes firm, sometimes feeble, according as the day was clear or cloudy; that Caswell, indeed, was a good whig, and kept these gentlemen to the notch, while he was present; but that he left us soon, and their line of conduct became then uncertain until Penn came, who fixed Hughes and the vote of the State. I must not be understood as suggesting any doubtfulness in the State of North Carolina. No State was more fixed or forward. Nor do I affirm, positively, that this paper is a fabrication; because the proof of a negative can only be presumptive. But I shall believe

it such until positive and solemn proof of its authenticity be produced. And if the name of McKnitt be real, and not a part of the fabrication, it needs a vindication by the production of such proof. For the present, I must be an unbeliever in the apocryphal gospel.

I am glad to learn that Mr. Ticknor has safely returned to his friends; but should have been much more pleased had he accepted the Professorship in our University, which we should have offered him in form. Mr. Bowditch, too, refuses us; so fascinating is the *vinculum* of the *dulce natale solum*. Our wish is to procure natives, where they can be found, like these gentlemen, of the first order of requirement in their respective lines; but preferring foreigners of the first order to natives of the second, we shall certainly have to go for several of our Professors, to countries more advanced in science than we are.

I set out within three or four days for my other home, the distance of which, and its cross mails, are great impediments to epistolary communications. I shall remain there about two months; and there, here, and everywhere, I am and shall always be, affectionately and respectfully yours.

TO JOHN BRAZIER, THE AUTHOR OF THE REVIEW OF PICKERING ON GREEK PRONUNCIATION.

POPLAR FOREST, August 24, 1819.

SIR,—The acknowledgment of your favor of July 15th, and thanks for the Review which it covered of

Mr. Pickering's Memoir on the Modern Greek, have been delayed by a visit to an occasional but distant residence from Monticello, and to an attack here of rheumatism which is just now moderating. I had been much pleased with the memoir, and was much also with your review of it. I have little hope indeed of the recovery of the ancient pronunciation of that finest of human languages, but still I rejoice at the attention the subject seems to excite with you, because it is an evidence that our country begins to have a taste for something more than merely as much Greek as will pass a candidate for clerical ordination.

You ask my opinion on the extent to which classical learning should be carried in our country. A sickly condition permits me to think, and a rheumatic hand to write too briefly on this litigated question. The utilities we derive from the remains of the Greek and Latin languages are, first, as models of pure taste in writing. To these we are certainly indebted for the rational and chaste style of modern composition which so much distinguishes the nations to whom these languages are familiar. Without these models we should probably have continued the inflated style of our northern ancestors, or the hyperbolical and vague one of the east. Second. Among the values of classical learning, I estimate the luxury of reading the Greek and Roman authors in all the beauties of their originals. And why should not this innocent and elegant luxury take its preëminent stand ahead of all those addressed merely

to the senses? I think myself more indebted to my father for this than for all the other luxuries his cares and affections have placed within my reach; and more now than when younger, and more susceptible of delights from other sources. When the decays of age have enfeebled the useful energies of the mind, the classic pages fill up the vacuum of *ennui*, and become sweet composers to that rest of the grave into which we are all sooner or later to descend. Third. A third value is in the stores of real science deposited and transmitted us in these languages, to wit: in history, ethics, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, natural history, etc.

But to whom are these things useful? Certainly not to all men. There are conditions of life to which they must be forever estranged, and there are epochs of life too, after which the endeavor to attain them would be a great misemployment of time. Their acquisition should be the occupation of our early years only, when the memory is susceptible of deep and lasting impressions, and reason and judgment not yet strong enough for abstract speculations. To the moralist they are valuable, because they furnish ethical writings highly and justly esteemed: although in my own opinion, the moderns are far advanced beyond them in this line of science, the divine finds in the Greek language a translation of his primary code, of more importance to him than the original because better understood; and, in the same language, the newer code, with the doctrines of the

earliest fathers, who lived and wrote before the simple precepts of the Founder of this most benign and pure of all systems of morality became frittered into subtleties and mysteries, and hidden under jargons incomprehensible to the human mind. To these original sources he must now, therefore, return, to recover the virgin purity of his religion. The lawyer finds in the Latin language the system of civil law most conformable with the principles of justice of any which has ever yet been established among men, and from which much has been incorporated into our own. The physician as good a code of his art as has been given us to this day. Theories and systems of medicine, indeed, have been in perpetual change from the days of the good Hippocrates to the days of the good Rush, but which of them is the true one? the present, to be sure, as long as it is the present, but to yield its place in turn to the next novelty, which is then to become the true system, and is to mark the vast advance of medicine since the days of Hippocrates. Our situation is certainly benefited by the discovery of some new and very valuable medicines; and substituting those for some of his with the treasure of facts, and of sound observations recorded by him (mixed, to be sure, with anilities of his day) and we shall have nearly the present sum of the healing art. The statesman will find in these languages history, politics, mathematics, ethics, eloquence, love of country, to which he must add the sciences of his own day, for which of them should be

unknown to him? And all the sciences must recur to the classical languages for the etymon, and sound understanding of their fundamental terms. For the merchant I should not say that the languages are a necessary. Ethics, mathematics, geography, political economy, history, seem to constitute the immediate foundations of his calling. The agriculturist needs ethics, mathematics, chemistry and natural philosophy. The mechanic the same. To them the languages are but ornament and comfort. I know it is often said there have been shining examples of men of great abilities in all the businesses of life, without any other science than what they had gathered from conversations and intercourse with the world. But who can say what these men would not have been, had they started in the science on the shoulders of a Demosthenes or Cicero, of a Locke or Bacon, or a Newton? To sum the whole, therefore, it may truly be said that the classical languages are a solid basis for most, and an ornament to all the sciences.

I am warned by my aching fingers to close this hasty sketch, and to place here my last and fondest wishes for the advancement of our country in the useful sciences and arts, and my assurances of respect and esteem for the Reviewer of the Memoir on modern Greek.

TO JUDGE SPENCER ROANE.

POPLAR FOREST, September 6, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—I had read in the Enquirer, and with great approbation, the pieces signed Hampden, and have read them again with redoubled approbation, in the copies you have been so kind as to send me. I subscribe to every tittle of them. They contain the true principles of the revolution of 1800, for that was as real a revolution in the principles of our government as that of 1776 was in its form; not effected indeed by the sword, as that, but by the rational and peaceable instrument of reform, the suffrage of the people. The nation declared its will by dismissing functionaries of one principle, and electing those of another, in the two branches, executive and legislature, submitted to their election. Over the judiciary department, the Constitution had deprived them of their control. That, therefore, has continued the reprobated system, and although new matter has been occasionally incorporated into the old, yet the leaven of the old mass seems to assimilate to itself the new, and after twenty years' confirmation of the federated system by the voice of the nation, declared through the medium of elections, we find the judiciary on every occasion, still driving us into consolidation.

In denying the right they usurp of exclusively explaining the Constitution, I go further than you do, if I understand rightly your quotation from the

Federalist, of an opinion that "the judiciary is the last resort in relation *to the other departments* of the government, but not in relation to the rights of the parties to the compact under which the judiciary is derived." If this opinion be sound, then indeed is our Constitution a complete *felo de se*. For intending to establish three departments, co-ordinate and independent, that they might check and balance one another, it has given, according to this opinion, to one of them alone, the right to prescribe rules for the government of the others, and to that one too, which is unelected by, and independent of the nation. For experience has already shown that the impeachment it has provided is not even a scare-crow; that such opinions as the one you combat, sent cautiously out, as you observe also, by detachment, not belonging to the case often, but sought for out of it, as if to rally the public opinion beforehand to their views, and to indicate the line they are to walk in, have been so quietly passed over as never to have excited animadversion, even in a speech of any one of the body entrusted with impeachment. The Constitution, on this hypothesis, is a mere thing of wax in the hands of the judiciary, which they may twist and shape into any form they please. It should be remembered, as an axiom of eternal truth in politics, that whatever power in any government is independent, is absolute also; in theory only, at first, while the spirit of the people is up, but in practice, as fast as that relaxes. Independence can be trusted

nowhere but with the people in mass. They are inherently independent of all but moral law. My construction of the Constitution is very different from that you quote. It is that each department is truly independent of the others, and has an equal right to decide for itself what is the meaning of the Constitution in the cases submitted to its action; and especially, where it is to act ultimately and without appeal. I will explain myself by examples, which, having occurred while I was in office, are better known to me, and the principles which governed them.

A legislature had passed the sedition law. The federal courts had subjected certain individuals to its penalties of fine and imprisonment. On coming into office, I released these individuals by the power of pardon committed to executive discretion, which could never be more properly exercised than where citizens were suffering without the authority of law, or, which was equivalent, under a law unauthorized by the Constitution, and therefore null. In the case of Marbury and Madison, the federal judges declared that commissions, signed and sealed by the President, were valid, although not delivered. I deemed delivery essential to complete a deed, which, as long as it remains in the hands of the party, is as yet no deed; it is *in posse* only, but not *in esse*, and I withheld delivery of the commissions. They cannot issue a mandamus to the President or legislature, or to any of their officers.[1] When the British treaty

[1] The Constitution controlling the common law in this particular.

of —— arrived, without any provision against the impressment of our seamen, I determined not to ratify it. The Senate thought I should ask their advice. I thought that would be a mockery of them, when I was predetermined against following it, should they advise its ratification. The Constitution had made their advice necessary to confirm a treaty, but not to reject it. This has been blamed by some; but I have never doubted its soundness. In the cases of two persons, *antenati*, under exactly similar circumstances, the federal court had determined that one of them (Duane) was not a citizen; the House of Representatives nevertheless determined that the other (Smith, of South Carolina) was a citizen, and admitted him to his seat in their body. Duane was a republican, and Smith a federalist, and these decisions were made during the federal ascendency.

These are examples of my position, that each of the three departments has equally the right to decide for itself what is its duty under the Constitution, without any regard to what the others may have decided for themselves under a similar question. But you intimate a wish that my opinion should be known on this subject. No, dear Sir, I withdraw from all contests of opinion, and resign everything cheerfully to the generation now in place. They are wiser than we were, and their successors will be wiser than they, from the progressive advance of science. Tranquillity is the *summum bonum* of age. I wish,

therefore, to offend no man's opinion, nor to draw disquieting animadversions on my own. While duty required it, I met opposition with a firm and fearless step. But loving mankind in my individual relations with them, I pray to be permitted to depart in their peace; and like the superannuated soldier, "*quadragenis stipendiis emeritis*," to hang my arms on the post. I have unwisely, I fear, embarked in an enterprise of great public concern, but not to be accomplished within my term, without their liberal and prompt support. A severe illness the last year, and another from which I am just emerged, admonish me that repetitions may be expected, against which a declining frame cannot long bear up. I am anxious, therefore, to get our University so far advanced as may encourage the public to persevere to its final accomplishment. That secured, I shall sing my *nunc dimittis*. I hope your labors will be long continued in the spirit in which they have always been exercised, in maintenance of those principles on which I verily believe the future happiness of our country essentially depends. I salute you with affectionate and great respect.

TO NATHANIEL F. MOORE.

MONTICELLO, September 22, 1819.

I thank you, Sir, for the remarks on the pronunciation of the Greek language which you have been so kind as to send me. I have read them with pleas-

ure, as I had the pamphlet of Mr. Pickering on the same subject. This question has occupied long and learned inquiry, and cannot, as I apprehend, be ever positively decided. Very early in my classical days, I took up the idea that the ancient Greek language having been changed by degrees into the modern, and the present race of that people having received it by tradition, they had of course better pretensions to the ancient pronunciation also, than any foreign nation could have. When at Paris, I became acquainted with some learned Greeks, from whom I took pains to learn the modern pronunciation. But I could not receive it as genuine *in toto*. I could not believe that the ancient Greeks had provided six different notations for the simple sound of ι, iota, and left the five other sounds which we give to *u*, *v*, ει, αι, υι, without any characters of notation at all. I could not acknowledge the υ, upsilon, as an equivalent to our *v*, as in Αχιλλευς, which they pronounce Achillevs, nor the γ, gamma, to our *y*, as in αλγε, which they pronounce alye. I concluded, therefore, that as experience proves to us that the pronunciation of all languages changes, in their descent through time, that of the Greek must have done so also in some degree; and the more probably, as the body of the words themselves had substantially changed, and I presumed that the instances above mentioned might be classed with the degeneracies of time; a presumption strengthened by their remarkable cacophony. As to all the other letters, I have supposed we might

yield to their traditionary claim of a more orthodox pronunciation. Indeed, they sound most of them as we do, and, where they differ, as in the ε, δ, χ, their sounds do not revolt us, nor impair the beauty of the language.

If we adhere to the Erasmian pronunciation, we must go to Italy for it, as we must do for the most probably correct pronunciation of the language of the Romans, because rejecting the modern, we must argue that the ancient pronunciation was probably brought from Greece, with the language itself; and, as Italy was the country to which it was brought, and from which it emanated to other nations, we must presume it better preserved there than with the nations copying from them, who would be apt to affect its pronunciation with some of their own national peculiarities. And in fact, we find that no two nations pronounce it alike, although all pretend to the Erasmian pronunciation. But the whole subject is conjectural, and allows therefore full and lawful scope to the vagaries of the human mind. I am glad, however, to see the question stirred here; because it may excite among our young countrymen a spirit of inquiry and criticism, and lead them to more attention to this most beautiful of all languages. And wishing that the salutary example you have set may have this good effect, I salute you with great respect and consideration.

TO WILLIAM SHORT.

MONTICELLO, October 31, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—Your favor of the 21st is received. My late illness, in which you are so kind as to feel an interest, was produced by a spasmodic stricture of the ileum, which came upon me on the 7th inst. The crisis was short, passed over favorably on the fourth day, and I should soon have been well but that a dose of calomel and jalap, in which were only eight or nine grains of the former, brought on a salivation. Of this, however, nothing now remains but a little soreness of the mouth. I have been able to get on horseback for three or four days past.

As you say of yourself, I too am an Epicurian. I consider the genuine (not the imputed) doctrines of Epicurus as containing everything rational in moral philosophy which Greece and Rome have left us. Epictetus indeed, has given us what was good of the Stoics; all beyond, of their dogmas, being hypocrisy and grimace. Their great crime was in their calumnies of Epicurus and misrepresentations of his doctrines; in which we lament to see the candid character of Cicero engaging as an accomplice. Diffuse, vapid, rhetorical, but enchanting. His prototype Plato, eloquent as himself, dealing out mysticisms incomprehensible to the human mind, has been deified by certain sects usurping the name of Christians; because, in his foggy conceptions, they found

a basis of impenetrable darkness whereon to rear fabrications as delirious, of their own invention. These they fathered blasphemously on Him whom they claimed as their Founder, but who would disclaim them with the indignation which their caricatures of His religion so justly excite. Of Socrates we have nothing genuine but in the Memorabilia of Xenophon; for Plato makes him one of his Collocutors merely to cover his own whimsies under the mantle of his name; a liberty of which we are told Socrates himself complained. Seneca is indeed a fine moralist, disfiguring his work at times with some Stoicisms, and affecting too much of antithesis and point, yet giving us on the whole a great deal of sound and practical morality. But the greatest of all the reformers of the depraved religion of His own country, was Jesus of Nazareth. Abstracting what is really His from the rubbish in which it is buried, easily distinguished by its lustre from the dross of His biographers, and as separable from that as the diamond from the dunghill, we have the outlines of a system of the most sublime morality which has ever fallen from the lips of man; outlines which it is lamentable He did not live to fill up. Epictetus and Epicurus give laws for governing ourselves, Jesus a supplement of the duties and charities we owe to others. The establishment of the innocent and genuine character of this benevolent Moralist, and the rescuing it from the imputation of imposture,

which has resulted from artificial systems,[1] invented by ultra-Christian sects, unauthorized by a single word ever uttered by Him, is a most desirable object, and one to which Priestley has successfully devoted his labors and learning. It would in time, it is to be hoped, effect a quiet euthanasia of the heresies of bigotry and fanaticism which have so long triumphed over human reason, and so generally and deeply afflicted mankind; but this work is to be begun by winnowing the grain from the chaff of the historians of His life. I have sometimes thought of translating Epictetus (for he has never been tolerably translated into English) by adding the genuine doctrines of Epicurus from the Syntagma of Gassendi, and an abstract from the Evangelists of whatever has the stamp of the eloquence and fine imagination of Jesus. The last I attempted too hastily some twelve or fifteen years ago. It was the work of two or three nights only, at Washington, after getting through the evening task of reading the letters and papers of the day. But with one foot in the grave, these are now idle projects for me. My business is to beguile the wearisomeness of declining life, as I endeavor to do, by the delights of classical reading and of mathematical truths, and by the consolations of a sound philosophy, equally indifferent to hope and fear.

[1] *E. g.* The immaculate conception of Jesus, His deification, the creation of the world by Him, His miraculous powers, His resurrection and visible ascension, His corporeal presence in the Eucharist, the Trinity, original sin, atonement, regeneration, election, orders of Hierarchy, etc.

I take the liberty of observing that you are not a true disciple of our master Epicurus, in indulging the indolence to which you say you are yielding. One of his canons, you know, was that "that indulgence which presents a greater pleasure, or produces a greater pain, is to be avoided." Your love of repose will lead, in its progress, to a suspension of healthy exercise, a relaxation of mind, an indifference to everything around you, and finally to a debility of body, and hebetude of mind, the farthest of all things from the happiness which the well-regulated indulgences of Epicurus ensure; fortitude, you know, is one of his four cardinal virtues. That teaches us to meet and surmount difficulties; not to fly from them, like cowards; and to fly, too, in vain, for they will meet and arrest us at every turn of our road. Weigh this matter well; brace yourself up; take a seat with Correa, and come and see the finest portion of your country, which, if you have not forgotten, you still do not know, because it is no longer the same as when you knew it. It will add much to the happiness of my recovery to be able to receive Correa and yourself, and prove the estimation in which I hold you both. Come, too, and see our incipient University, which has advanced with great activity this year. By the end of the next, we shall have elegant accommodations for seven professors, and the year following the professors themselves. No secondary character will be received among them. Either the ablest which America or Europe can furnish, or none at all. They

will give us the selected society of a great city separated from the dissipations and levities of its ephemeral insects.

I am glad the bust of Condorcet has been saved and so well placed. His genius should be before us; while the lamentable, but singular act of ingratitude which tarnished his latter days, may be thrown behind us.

I will place under this a syllabus of the doctrines of Epicurus, somewhat in the lapidary style, which I wrote some twenty years ago; a like one of the philosophy of Jesus, of nearly the same age, is too long to be copied. *Vale, et tibi persuade carissimum te esse mihi.*

Syllabus of the doctrines of Epicurus.

Physical.—The Universe eternal.

Its parts, great and small, interchangeable.

Matter and Void alone.

Motion inherent in matter which is weighty and declining.

Eternal circulation of the elements of bodies.

Gods, an order of beings next superior to man, enjoying in their sphere, their own felicities; but not meddling with the concerns of the scale of beings below them.

Moral.—Happiness the aim of life.

Virtue the foundation of happiness.

Utility the test of virtue.

Pleasure active and In-do-lent.

In-do-lence is the absence of pain, the true felicity.

Active, consists in agreeable motion; it is not happiness, but the means to produce it.

Thus the absence of hunger is an article of felicity; eating the means to obtain it.

The *summum bonum* is to be not pained in body, nor troubled in mind.

i. e. In-do-lence of body, tranquillity of mind.

To procure tranquillity of mind we must avoid desire and fear, the two principal diseases of the mind.

Man is a free agent.

Virtue consists in 1. Prudence. 2. Temperance. 3. Fortitude. 4. Justice.

To which are opposed, 1. Folly. 2. Desire. 3. Fear. 4. Deceit.

TO JOHN ADAMS, ESQ.

MONTICELLO, November 7, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—Three long and dangerous illnesses within the last twelve months, must apologize for my long silence towards you.

The paper bubble is then burst. This is what you and I, and every reasoning man, seduced by no obliquity of mind or interest, have long foreseen; yet its disastrous effects are not the less for having been foreseen. We were laboring under a dropsical fulness of circulating medium. Nearly all of it is now called in by the banks, who have the regulation

of the safety-valves of our fortunes, and who condense and explode them at their will. Lands in this State cannot now be sold for a year's rent; and unless our legislature have wisdom enough to effect a remedy by a gradual diminution only of the medium, there will be a general revolution of property in this State. Over our own paper and that of other States coming among us, they have competent powers; over that of the bank of the United States there is doubt, not here, but elsewhere. That bank will probably conform voluntarily to such regulations as the legislature may prescribe for the others. If they do not, we must shut their doors, and join the other States which deny the right of Congress to establish banks, and solicit them to agree to some mode of settling this constitutional question. They have themselves twice decided against their right, and twice for it. Many of the States have been uniform in denying it, and between such parties the Constitution has provided no umpire. I do not know particularly the extent of this distress in the other States; but southwardly and westwardly I believe all are involved in it. God bless you, and preserve you many years.

TO COLONEL JOHN NICHOLAS.

MONTICELLO, November 10, 1819.

SIR,—Your letter, and the draught of a memorial proposed to be presented to the legislature, are duly

received. With respect to impressions from any differences of political opinion, whether major or minor, alluded to in your letter, I have none. I left them all behind me on quitting Washington, where alone the state of things had, till then, required some attention to them. Nor was that the lightest part of the load I was there disburdened of; and could I permit myself to believe that with the change of circumstances a corresponding change had taken place in the minds of those who differed from me, and that I now stand in the peace and good will of my fellow citizens generally, it would indeed be a sweetening ingredient in the last dregs of my life. It is not then from that source that my testimony may be scanty, but from a decaying memory, illy retaining things of recent transaction, and scarcely with any distinctness those of forty years back, the period to which your memorial refers: general impressions of them remain, but details are mostly obliterated.

Of the transfer of your corps from the general to the State line, and the other facts in the memorial preceding my entrance on the administration of the State government, June 2, 1779, I, of course, have no knowledge; but public documents, as well as living witnesses, will probably supply this. In 1780, I remember your appointment to a command in the militia sent under General Stevens to the aid of the Carolinas, of which fact the commission signed by myself is sufficient proof. But I have no particular recollections which respect yourself personally in

that service. Of what took place during Arnold's invasion in the subsequent winter I have more knowledge, because so much passed under my own eye, and I have the benefit of some notes to aid my memory. In the short interval of fifty-seven hours between our knowing they had entered James river and their actual debarkation at Westover, we could get together but a small body of militia, (my notes say of three hundred men only,) chiefly from the city and its immediate vicinities. You were placed in the command of these, and ordered to proceed to the neighborhood of the enemy, not with any view to face them directly with so small a force, but to hang on their skirts, and to check their march as much as could be done, to give time for the more distant militia to assemble. The enemy were not to be delayed, however, and were in Richmond in twenty-four hours from their being formed on shore at Westover. The day before their arrival at Richmond, I had sent my family to Tuckahoe, as the memorial states, at which place I joined them about 1 o'clock of that night, having attended late at Westham, to have the public stores and papers thrown across the river. You came up to us at Tuckahoe the next morning, and accompanied me, I think, to Britton's opposite Westham, to see about the further safety of the arms and other property. Whether you stayed there to look after them, or went with me to the heights of Manchester, and returned thence to Britton's, I do not recollect. The enemy evacuated

Richmond at noon of the 5th of January, having remained there but twenty-three hours. I returned to it in the morning of the 8th, they being still encamped at Westover and Berkley, and yourself and corps at the Forest. They re-embarked at 1 o'clock of the 10th. The particulars of your movements down the river, to oppose their re-landing at different points, I do not specifically recollect, but, as stated in the memorial, they are so much in agreement with my general impressions, that I have no doubt of their correctness, and I know that your conduct from the first advance of the enemy to his departure, was approved by myself and by others generally. The rendezvous of the militia at the Tuckahoe bridge and your having the command of them, I think I also remember, but nothing of their subsequent movements. The legislature had adjourned to meet at Charlottesville, where, at the expiration of my second year, I declined a re-election in the belief that a military man would be more likely to render services adequate to the exigencies of the times. Of the subsequent facts, therefore, stated in the memorial, I have no knowledge.

This, Sir, is the sum of the information I am able to give on the subjects of your memorial, and if it may contribute to the purposes of justice in your case, I shall be happy that in bearing testimony to the truth, I shall have rendered you a just service. I return the memorial and commission, as requested, and pray you to accept my respectful salutations.

TO WILLIAM C. RIVES.

MONTICELLO, November 28, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—The distresses of our country, produced first by the flood, then by the ebb of bank paper, are such as cannot fail to engage the interposition of the legislature. Many propositions will, of course, be offered, from all of which something may probably be culled to make a good whole. I explained to you my project, when I had the pleasure of possessing you here; and I now send its outline in writing, as I believe I promised you. Although preferable things will I hope be offered, yet some twig of this may perhaps be thought worthy of being engrafted on a better stock. But I send it with no particular object or request, but to use it as you please. Suppress it, suggest it, sound opinions, or anything else, at will, only keeping my name unmentioned, for which purpose it is copied in another hand, being ever solicitous to avoid all offence which is heavily felt, when retired from the bustle and contentions of the world. If we suffer the moral of the present lesson to pass away without improvement by the eternal suppression of bank *paper*, then indeed is the condition of our country desperate, until the slow advance of public instruction shall give to our functionaries the wisdom of their station. *Vale, et tibi persuade carissimum te mihi esse.*

sold for payment of the first instalments of debts will be moderate, and time will be given for economy and industry to come in aid of those subsequent. Certainly no nation ever before abandoned to the avarice and jugglings of private individuals to regulate, according to their own interests, the quantum of circulating medium for the nation, to inflate, by deluges of paper, the nominal prices of property, and then to buy up that property at 1s. in the pound, having first withdrawn the floating medium which might endanger a competition in purchase. Yet this is what has been done, and will be done, unless stayed by the protecting hand of the legislature. The evil has been produced by the error of their sanction of this ruinous machinery of banks; and justice, wisdom, duty, all require that they should interpose and arrest it before the schemes of plunder and spoliation desolate the country. It is believed that harpies are already hoarding their money to commence these scenes on the separation of the legislature; and we know that lands have been already sold under the hammer for less than a year's rent.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

MONTICELLO, December 10, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—I have to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of November the 23d. The banks, bankrupt law, manufactures, Spanish treaty, are nothing.

These are occurrences which, like waves in a storm, will pass under the ship. But the Missouri question is a breaker on which we lose the Missouri country by revolt, and what more, God only knows. From the battle of Bunker's Hill to the treaty of Paris, we never had so ominous a question. It even damps the joy with which I hear of your high health, and welcomes to me the consequences of my want of it. I thank God that I shall not live to witness its issue. *Sed hæc hactenus.*

I have been amusing myself latterly with reading the voluminous letters of Cicero. They certainly breathe the purest effusions of an exalted patriot, while the parricide Cæsar is lost in odious contrast. When the enthusiasm, however, kindled by Cicero's pen and principles, subsides into cool reflection, I ask myself, what was that government which the virtues of Cicero were so zealous to restore, and the ambition of Cæsar to subvert? And if Cæsar had been as virtuous as he was daring and sagacious, what could he, even in the plenitude of his usurped power, have done to lead his fellow citizens into good government? I do not say to *restore it*, because they never had it, from the rape of the Sabines to the ravages of the Cæsars. If their people indeed had been, like ourselves, enlightened, peaceable, and really free, the answer would be obvious. "Restore independence to all your foreign conquests, relieve Italy from the government of the rabble of Rome, consult it as a nation entitled to self-government, and

do its will." But steeped in corruption, vice and venality, as the whole nation was, (and nobody had done more than Cæsar to corrupt it,) what could even Cicero, Cato, Brutus have done, had it been referred to them to establish a good government for their country? They had no ideas of government themselves, but of their degenerate Senate, nor the people of liberty, but of the factious opposition of their tribunes. They had afterwards their Tituses, their Trajans and Antoninuses, who had the will to make them happy, and the power to mould their government into a good and permanent form. But it would seem as if they could not see their way clearly to do it. No government can continue good, but under the control of the people; and their people were so demoralized and depraved, as to be incapable of exercising a wholesome control. Their reformation then was to be taken up *ab incunabulis*. Their minds were to be informed by education what is right and what wrong; to be encouraged in habits of virtue, and deterred from those of vice by the dread of punishments, proportioned indeed, but irremissible; in all cases, to follow truth as the only safe guide, and to eschew error, which bewilders us in one false consequence after another, in endless succession. These are the inculcations necessary to render the people a sure basis for the structure of order and good government. But this would have been an operation of a generation or two, at least, within which period would have succeeded many

Neros and Commoduses, who would have quashed the whole process. I confess then, I can neither see what Cicero, Cato and Brutus, united and uncontrolled, could have devised to lead their people into good government, nor how this enigma can be solved, nor how further shown why it has been the fate of that delightful country never to have known, to this day, and through a course of five and twenty hundred years, the history of which we possess, one single day of free and rational government. Your intimacy with their history, ancient, middle and modern, your familiarity with the improvements in the science of government at this time, will enable you, if any body, to go back with our principles and opinions to the times of Cicero, Cato and Brutus, and tell us by what process these great and virtuous men could have led so unenlightened and vitiated a people into freedom and good government, *et eris mihi magnus Apollo. Cura ut valeas, et tibi persuadeas carissimum te mihi esse.*

JOHN ADAMS TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

MONTEZILLO, December 21, 1819.

DEAR SIR,—I must answer your great question of the 10th in the words of D'Alembert to his correspondent, who asked him what is matter—"*Je vous avoue je ne scais rien.*" In some part of my life I record a great work of a Scotchman on the court of Augustus, in which, with much learning, hard study, and

TO HUGH NELSON, ESQ.

MONTICELLO, March 12, 1820.

I thank you, dear Sir, for the information in your favor of the 4th instant, of the settlement, *for the present*, of the Missouri question. I am so completely withdrawn from all attention to public matters, that nothing less could arouse me than the definition of a geographical line, which on an abstract principle is to become the line of separation of these States, and to render desperate the hope that man can ever enjoy the two blessings of peace and self-government. The question sleeps for the present, but is not dead. This State is in a condition of unparalleled distress. The sudden reduction of the circulating medium from a plethory to all but annihilation is producing an entire revolution of fortune. In other places I have known lands sold by the sheriff for one year's rent; beyond the mountain we hear of good slaves selling for one hundred dollars, good horses for five dollars, and the sheriffs generally the purchasers. Our produce is now selling at market for one-third of its price before this commercial catastrophe, say flour at three and a quarter and three and a half dollars the barrel. We should have less right to expect relief from our legislators if they had been the establishers of the unwise system of banks. A remedy to a certain degree was practicable, that of reducing the quantum of circulation gradually to a level with that of the countries with

which we have commerce, and an eternal abjuration of paper. But they have adjourned without doing anything. I fear local insurrections against these horrible sacrifices of property. In every condition of trouble or tranquillity be assured of my constant esteem and respect.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

MONTICELLO, March 14, 1820.

DEAR SIR,—A continuation of poor health makes me an irregular correspondent. I am, therefore, your debtor for the two letters of January 20th and February 21st. It was after you left Europe that Dugald Stewart, concerning whom you inquire, and Lord Dare, second son of the Marquis of Lansdowne, came to Paris. They brought me a letter from Lord Wycombe, whom you knew. I became immediately intimate with Stewart, calling mutually on each other and almost daily, during their stay at Paris, which was of some months. Lord Dare was a young man of imagination, with occasional flashes indicating deep penetration, but of much caprice, and little judgment. He has been long dead, and the family title is now, I believe, in the third son, who has shown in Parliament talents of a superior order. Stewart is a great man, and among the most honest living. I have heard nothing of his dying at top, as you suppose. Mr. Ticknor, however, can give you the best information on that subject, as he must

have heard particularly of him when in Edinburgh, although I believe he did not see him. I have understood he was then in London superintending the publication of a new work. I consider him and Tracy as the ablest metaphysicians living; by which I mean investigators of the thinking faculty of man. Stewart seems to have given its natural history from facts and observations; Tracy its modes of action and deduction, which he calls Logic and Ideology; and Cabanis, in his Physique et Morale de l'Homme, has investigated anatomically, and most ingeniously, the particular organs in the human structure which may most probably exercise that faculty. And they ask why may not the mode of action called thought, have been given to a material organ of peculiar structure, as that of magnetism is to the needle, or of elasticity to the spring by a particular manipulation of the steel. They observe that on ignition of the needle or spring, their magnetism and elasticity cease. So on dissolution of the material organ by death, its action of thought may cease also, and that nobody supposes that the magnetism or elasticity retire to hold a substantive and distinct existence. These were qualities only of particular conformations of matter; change the conformation, and its qualities change also. Mr. Locke, you know, and other materialists, have charged with blasphemy the spiritualists who have denied the Creator the power of endowing certain forms of matter with the faculty of thought. These, however, are speculations and

subtleties in which, for my own part, I have little indulged myself. When I meet with a proposition beyond finite comprehension, I abandon it as I do a weight which human strength cannot lift, and I think ignorance, in these cases, is truly the softest pillow on which I can lay my head. Were it necessary, however, to form an opinion, I confess I should, with Mr. Locke, prefer swallowing one incomprehensibility rather than two. It requires one effort only to admit the single incomprehensibility of matter endowed with thought, and two to believe, first that of an existence called spirit, of which we have neither evidence nor idea, and then secondly how that spirit, which has neither extension nor solidity, can put material organs into motion. These are things which you and I may perhaps know ere long. We have so lived as to fear neither horn of the dilemma. We have, willingly, done injury to no man; and have done for our country the good which has fallen in our way, so far as commensurate with the faculties given us. That we have not done more than we could, cannot be imputed to us as a crime before any tribunal. I look, therefore, to the crisis, as I am sure you also do, as one "*qui summum nec metuit diem nec optat.*" In the meantime be our last as cordial as were our first affections.

TO THE HONORABLE MARK LANGDON HILL.

MONTICELLO, April 5, 1820.

SIR,—A near relation of my late friend Governor Langdon, needs no apology for addressing a letter to me, that relationship giving sufficient title to all my respect. We were fellow laborers from the beginning of the first to the accomplishment of the second revolution in our government, of the same zeal and the same sentiments, and I shall honor his memory while memory remains to me. The letter you mention is proof of my friendship and unreserved confidence in him; it was written in warm times, and is therefore too warmly expressed for the more reconciled temper of the present day. I must pray you, therefore, not to let it get before the public, lest it rekindle a flame which burnt too long and too fiercely against me. It was my lot to be placed at the head of the column which made the first breach in the ramparts of federalism, and to be charged, on that event, with the duty of changing the course of the government from what we deemed a monarchical, to its republican tack. This made me the mark for every shaft which calumny and falsehood could point against me. I bore them with resignation, as one of the duties imposed on me by my post. But I assure you it was among the most painful duties from which I hoped to find relief in retirement. Tranquillity is the *summum bonum* of old age and ill health, and nothing could so much disturb this with me as to

awaken angry feelings from the slumber in which I wish them ever to remain. I beseech you then, good Sir, in the name of my departed friend, not to bring on me a contention which neither duty nor public good requires me to encounter.

I regret the circumstances which have deprived us of the pleasure of your visit, but console myself with the French proverb that "all is not lost which is deferred," and the hope that more favorable circumstances will some day give us that gratification. I congratulate you on the sleep of the Missouri question. I wish I could say on its death, but of this I despair. The idea of a geographical line once suggested will brood in the minds of all those who prefer the gratification of their ungovernable passions to the peace and union of their country. If I do not contemplate this subject with pleasure, I do sincerely that of the independence of Maine, and the wise choice they have made of General King in the agency of their affairs, and I tender to yourself the assurance of my esteem and respect.

TO WILLIAM SHORT.

MONTICELLO, April 13, 1820.

DEAR SIR,—Your favor of March the 27th is received, and as you request, a copy of the syllabus is now enclosed. It was originally written to Dr. Rush. On his death, fearing that the inquisition of the public might get hold of it, I asked the return of

it from the family, which they kindly complied with. At the request of another friend, I had given him a copy. He lent it to *his* friend to read, who copied it, and in a few months it appeared in the Theological Magazine of London. Happily that repository is scarcely known in this country, and the syllabus, therefore, is still a secret, and in your hands I am sure it will continue so.

But while this syllabus is meant to place the character of Jesus in its true and high light, as no impostor Himself, but a great Reformer of the Hebrew code of religion, it is not to be understood that I am with Him in all His doctrines. I am a Materialist; he takes the side of Spiritualism; he preaches the efficacy of repentance towards forgiveness of sin; I require a counterpoise of good works to redeem it, etc., etc. It is the innocence of His character, the purity and sublimity of His moral precepts, the eloquence o His inculcations, the beauty of the apologues in which He conveys them, that I so much admire; sometimes, indeed, needing indulgence to eastern hyperbolism. My eulogies, too, may be founded on a postulate which all may not be ready to grant. Among the sayings and discourses imputed to Him by His biographers, I find many passages of fine imagination, correct morality, and of the most lovely benevolence; and others, again, of so much ignorance, so much absurdity, so much untruth, charlatanism and imposture, as to pronounce it impossible that such contradictions should have

proceeded from the same Being. I separate, therefore, the gold from the dross; restore to Him the former, and leave the latter to the stupidity of some, and roguery of others of His disciples. Of this band of dupes and impostors, Paul was the great Coryphæus, and first corruptor of the doctrines of Jesus. These palpable interpolations and falsifications of His doctrines, led me to try to sift them apart. I found the work obvious and easy, and that His past composed the most beautiful morsel of morality which has been given to us by man. The syllabus is therefore of *His* doctrines, not *all* of ***mine***. I read them as I do those of other ancient and modern moralists, with a mixture of approbation and dissent.

I rejoice, with you, to see an encouraging spirit of internal improvement prevailing in the States. The opinion I have ever expressed of the advantages of a western communication through the James river, I still entertain; and that the Cayuga is the most promising of the links of communication.

The history of our University you know so far. Seven of the ten pavilions destined for the professors, and about thirty dormitories, will be completed this year; and three other, with six hotels for boarding, and seventy other dormitories, will be completed the next year, and the whole be in readiness then to receive those who are to occupy them. But means to bring these into place, and to set the machine into motion, must come from the legislature. An opposition, in the meantime, has been got up. That of

our *alma mater*, William and Mary, is not of much weight. She must descend into the secondary rank of academies of preparation for the University. The serious enemies are the priests of the different religious sects, to whose spells on the human mind its improvement is ominous. Their pulpits are now resounding with denunciations against the appointment of Doctor Cooper, whom they charge as a monotheist in opposition to their tritheism. Hostile as these sects are, in every other point, to one another, they unite in maintaining their mystical theogony against those who believe there is one God only. The Presbyterian clergy are loudest; the most intolerant of all sects, the most tyrannical and ambitious; ready at the word of the lawgiver, if such a word could be now obtained, to put the torch to the pile, and rekindle in this virgin hemisphere, the flames in which their oracle Calvin consumed the poor Servetus, because he could not find in his Euclid the proposition which has demonstrated that three are one and one is three, nor subscribe to that of Calvin, that magistrates have a right to exterminate all heretics to Calvinistic Creed. They pant to re-establish, *by law*, that holy inquisition, which they can now only infuse into *public opinion*. We have most unwisely committed to the hierophants of our particular superstition, the direction of public opinion, that lord of the universe. We have given them stated and privileged days to collect and catechise us, opportunities of delivering their oracles to the

people in mass, and of moulding their minds as wax in the hollow of their hands. But in despite of their fulminations against endeavors to enlighten the general mind, to improve the reason of the people, and encourage them in the use of it, the liberality of this State will support this institution, and give fair play to the cultivation of reason. Can you ever find a more eligible occasion of visiting once more your native country, than that of accompanying Mr. Correa, and of seeing with him this beautiful and hopeful institution *in ovo*?

Although I had laid down as a law to myself, never to write, talk, or even think of politics, to know nothing of public affairs, and therefore had ceased to read newspapers, yet the Missouri question aroused and filled me with alarm. The old schism of federal and republican threatened nothing, because it existed in every State, and united them together by the fraternism of party. But the coincidence of a marked principle, moral and political, with a geographical line, once conceived, I feared would never more be obliterated from the mind; that it would be recurring on every occasion and renewing irritations, until it would kindle such mutual and mortal hatred, as to render separation preferable to eternal discord. I have been among the most sanguine in believing that our Union would be of long duration. I now doubt it much, and see the event at no great distance, and the direct consequence of this question; not by

the line which has been so confidently counted on; the laws of nature control this; but by the Potomac, Ohio and Missouri, or more probably, the Mississippi upwards to our northern boundary. My only comfort and confidence is, that I shall not live to see this; and I envy not the present generation the glory of throwing away the fruits of their fathers' sacrifices of life and fortune, and of rendering desperate the experiment which was to decide ultimately whether man is capable of self-government? This treason against human hope, will signalize their epoch in future history, as the counterpart of the medal of their predecessors.

You kindly inquire after my health. There is nothing in it immediately threatening, but swelled legs, which are kept down mechanically, by bandages from the toe to the knee. These I have worn for six months. But the tendency to turgidity may proceed from debility alone. I can walk the round of my garden; not more. But I ride six or eight miles a day without fatigue. I shall set out for Poplar Forest within three or four days; a journey from which my physician augurs much good.

I salute you with constant and affectionate friendship and respect.

TO JOHN HOLMES.

MONTICELLO, April 22, 1820.

I thank you, dear Sir, for the copy you have been so kind as to send me of the letter to your constituents

on the Missouri question. It is a perfect justification to them. I had for a long time ceased to read newspapers, or pay any attention to public affairs, confident they were in good hands, and content to be a passenger in our bark to the shore from which I am not distant. But this momentous question, like a fire-bell in the night, awakened and filled me with terror. I considered it at once as the knell of the Union. It is hushed, indeed, for the moment. But this is a reprieve only, not a final sentence. A geographical line, coinciding with a marked principle, moral and political, once conceived and held up to the angry passions of men, will never be obliterated; and every new irritation will mark it deeper and deeper. I can say, with conscious truth, that there is not a man on earth who would sacrifice more than I would to relieve us from this heavy reproach, in any *practicable* way. The cession of that kind of property, for so it is misnamed, is a bagatelle which would not cost me a second thought, if, in that way, a general emancipation and *expatriation* could be effected; and, gradually, and with due sacrifices, I think it might be. But as it is, we have the wolf by the ears, and we can neither hold him, nor safely let him go. Justice is in one scale, and self-preservation in the other. Of one thing I am certain, that as the passage of slaves from one State to another, would not make a slave of a single human being who would not be so without it, so their diffusion over a greater surface would make them individually happier, and pro-

portionally facilitate the accomplishment of their emancipation, by dividing the burden on a greater number of coadjutors. An abstinence too, from this act of power, would remove the jealousy excited by the undertaking of Congress to regulate the condition of the different descriptions of men composing a State. This certainly is the exclusive right of every State, which nothing in the Constitution has taken from them and given to the General Government. Could Congress, for example, say, that the non-freemen of Connecticut shall be freemen, or that they shall not emigrate into any other State?

I regret that I am now to die in the belief, that the useless sacrifice of themselves by the generation of 1776, to acquire self-government and happiness to their country, is to be thrown away by the unwise and unworthy passions of their sons, and that my only consolation is to be, that I live not to weep over it. If they would but dispassionately weigh the blessings they will throw away, against an abstract principle more likely to be effected by union than by scission, they would pause before they would perpetrate this act of suicide on themselves, and of treason against the hopes of the world. To yourself, as the faithful advocate of the Union, I tender the offering of my high esteem and respect.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (JAMES MONROE).

MONTICELLO, May 14, 1820.

DEAR SIR,—Your favor of the 3d is received, and always with welcome. These texts of truth relieve me from the floating falsehoods of the public papers. I confess to you I am not sorry for the non-ratification of the Spanish treaty. Our assent to it has proved our desire to be on friendly terms with Spain; their dissent, the imbecility and malignity of their government towards us, have placed them in the wrong in the eyes of the world, and that is well; but to us the province of Techas will be the richest State of our Union, without any exception. Its southern part will make more sugar than we can consume, and the Red river, on its north, is the most luxuriant country on earth. Florida, moreover, is ours. Every nation in Europe considers it such a right. We need not care for its occupation in time of peace, and, in war, the first cannon makes it ours without offence to anybody. The friendly advisements, too, of Russia and France, as well as the change of government in Spain, now ensured, require a further and respectful forbearance. While their request will rebut the plea of proscriptive possession, it will give us a right to their approbation when taken in the maturity of circumstances. I really think, too, that neither the state of our finances, the condition of our country, nor the public opinion, urges us

to precipitation into war. The treaty has had the valuable effect of strengthening our title to the Techas, because the cession of the Floridas in exchange for Techas imports an acknowledgment of our right to it. This province moreover, the Floridas and possibly Cuba, will join us on the acknowledgment of their independence, a measure to which their new government will probably accede voluntarily. But why should I be saying all this to you, whose mind all the circumstances of this affair have had possession for years? I shall rejoice to see you here; and were I to live to see you here finally, it would be a day of jubilee. But our days are all numbered, and mine are not many. God bless you and preserve you *muchos años*.

TO GENERAL ROBERT TAYLOR.

MONTICELLO, May 16, 1820.

DEAR SIR,—We regretted much your absence at the late meeting of the Board of Visitors, but did not doubt it was occasioned by uncontrollable circumstances. As the matters which came before us were of great importance to the institution, I think it a duty to inform you of them.

You know the sanction of the legislature to our borrowing $60,000 on the pledge of our annuity of $15,000. The Literary Board offered us $40,000 on that pledge, to be repaid at five instalments, commencing at the end of the third year from the date

of the loan, and interest to be regularly paid in the meantime. We endeavored to obtain permission to draw for only $15,000 at first, and for $2,000 monthly afterwards, to avoid the payment of dead interest. This they declined, as bound themselves to keep the whole of their capital always in a course of fructification. We then requested a postponement of the instalments to the fourth instead of the third year, with an additional loan of the further sum of $20,000, authorized by the law. To the postponement they acceded, and we are assured they will to the further loan. To explain to them the urgency of this additional year's postponement, a paper was laid before them of which I enclose you a copy, and on which you are now acting. Should the legislature not help us to the $93,600 there noted, the result will be that at the end of the next year all the buildings will be completed, (the library excepted,) and will then remain unoccupied five years longer, until our funds shall be free for the engagements of professors. Should they, on the other hand, give this aid, our funds will be free, at the beginning of the next year, and will enable us to take measures for procuring professors in the course of that summer, and to open the University. We were all of opinion that we ought to complete the buildings for the ten professors contemplated, as well as accommodations for the students, before opening the institution; for were we to stop at any point short of the full establishment, and open partially, as our funds would thenceforward

be absorbed by the professors' salaries, we should never be able to advance a step further, nor to cover the whole field of science contemplated by the law, and made the object of our care and duty. We thought it better, therefore, to risk a delay of eight years for a perfect establishment, than to begin earlier and go on forever with a defective one; and we suppose it impossible that either the legislature, or their constituents, should not consider an immediate commencement as worth the sum necessary to procure it. You will observe that in the estimate enclosed, no account is taken of our subscription moneys. They are, in fact, too uncertain in their collection to found any necessary contracts; and we thought it better, therefore, to reserve them as a contingent fund, and a resource to cover miscalculations and accidents.

Another subject on this, as on former occasions, gave us embarrassment. You may have heard of the hue and cry raised from the different pulpits on our appointment of Dr. Cooper, whom they charge with Unitarianism as boldly as if they knew the fact, and as presumptuously as if it were a crime, and one for which, like Servetus, he should be burned; and perhaps you may have seen the particular attack made on him in the Evangelical magazine. For myself I was not disposed to regard the denunciations of these satellites of religious inquisition; but our colleagues, better judges of popular feeling, thought that they were not to be altogether neglected; and

that it might be better to relieve Dr. Cooper, ourselves and the institution from this crusade. I had received a letter from him expressing his uneasiness, not only for himself, but lest this persecution should become embarrassing to the visitors, and injurious to the institution; with an offer to resign, if we had the same apprehensions. The Visitors, therefore, desired the Committee of Superintendence to place him at freedom on this subject, and to arrange with him a suitable indemnification. I wrote accordingly in answer to his, and a meeting of trustees of the college at Columbia happening to take place soon after his receipt of my letter, they resolved unanimously that it should be proposed to, and urged on their legislature, to establish a professorship of Geology and Mineralogy, or a professorship of law, with a salary of $1,000 a year to be given him, in addition to that of chemistry, which is $2,000 a year, and to purchase his collection of minerals; and they have no doubt of the legislature's compliance. On the subject of indemnification, he is contented with the balance of the $1,500 we had before agreed to give him, and which he says will not more than cover his actual losses of time and expense; he adds, "it is right I should acknowledge the liberality of your board with thanks. I regret the storm that has been raised on my account; for it has separated me from many fond hopes and wishes. Whatever my religious creed may be, and perhaps I do not exactly know it myself, it is pleasure to reflect that my con-

duct has not brought, and is not likely to bring, discredit to my friends. Wherever I have been, it has been my good fortune to meet with, or to make ardent and affectionate friends. I feel persuaded I should have met with the same lot in Virginia had it been my chance to have settled there, as I had hoped and expected, for I think my course of conduct is sufficiently habitual to count on its effects."

I do sincerely lament that untoward circumstances have brought on us the irreparable loss of this professor, whom I have looked to as the corner-stone of our edifice. I know no one who could have aided us so much in forming the future regulations for our infant institution; and although we may perhaps obtain from Europe equivalents in science, they can never replace the advantages of his experience, his knowledge of the character, habits and manners of our country, his identification with its sentiments and principles, and high reputation he has obtained in it generally.

In the hope of meeting you at our fall visitation, and that you will do me the favor of making this your headquarters, and of coming the day before, at least, that we may prepare our business at ease, I tender you the assurance of my great esteem and respect.

TO WILLIAM SHORT.

MONTICELLO, August 4, 1820.

DEAR SIR,—I owe you a letter for your favor of June the 29th, which was received in due time; and there being no subject of the day, of particular interest, I will make this a supplement to mine of April the 13th. My aim in that was to justify the character of Jesus against the fictions of His pseudo-followers, which have exposed Him to the inference of being an impostor. For if we could believe that He really countenanced the follies, the falsehoods, and the charlatanisms which His biographers father on Him, and admit the misconstructions, interpolations, and theorizations of the fathers of the early, and fanatics of the latter ages, the conclusion would be irresistible by every sound mind, that He was an impostor. I give no credit to their falsifications of His actions and doctrines, and to rescue His character, the postulate in my letter asked only what is granted in reading every other historian. When Livy and Siculus, for example, tell us things which coincide with our experience of the order of nature, we credit them on their word, and place their narrations among the records of credible history. But when they tell us of calves speaking, of statues sweating blood, and other things against the course of nature, we reject these as fables not belonging to history. In like manner, when an historian, speaking of a character well known and established on satisfactory testi-

mony, imputes to it things incompatible with that character, we reject them without hesitation, and assent to that only of which we have better evidence. Had Plutarch informed us that Cæsar and Cicero passed their whole lives in religious exercises, and abstinence from the affairs of the world, we should reject what was so inconsistent with their established characters, still crediting what he relates in conformity with our ideas of them. So again, the superlative wisdom of Socrates is testified by all antiquity, and placed on ground not to be questioned. When, therefore, Plato puts into his mouth such paralogisms, such quibbles on words, and sophisms as a schoolboy would be ashamed of, we conclude they were the whimsies of Plato's own foggy brain, and acquit Socrates of puerilities so unlike his character. (Speaking of Plato, I will add, that no writer, ancient or modern, has bewildered the world with more *ignis fatui*, than this renowned philosopher, in Ethics, in Politics, and Physics. In the latter, to specify a single example, compare his views of the animal economy, in his Timæus, with those of Mrs. Bryan in her Conversations on Chemistry, and weigh the science of the canonized philosopher against the good sense of the unassuming lady. But Plato's visions have furnished a basis for endless systems of mystical theology, and he is therefore all but adopted as a Christian saint. It is surely time for men to think for themselves, and to throw off the authority of names so artificially magnified. But to return from

this parenthesis.) I say, that this free exercise of reason is all I ask for the vindication of the character of Jesus. We find in the writings of His biographers matter of two distinct descriptions. First, a groundwork of vulgar ignorance, of things impossible, of superstitions, fanaticisms, and fabrications. Intermixed with these, again, are sublime ideas of the Supreme Being, aphorisms, and precepts of the purest morality and benevolence, sanctioned by a life of humility, innocence, and simplicity of manners, neglect of riches, absence of worldly ambition and honors, with an eloquence and persuasiveness which have not been surpassed. These could not be inventions of the grovelling authors who relate them. They are far beyond the powers of their feeble minds. They show that there was a character, the subject of their history, whose splendid conceptions were above all suspicion of being interpolations from their hands. Can we be at a loss in separating such materials, and ascribing each to its genuine author? The difference is obvious to the eye and to the understanding, and we may read as we run to each his part; and I will venture to affirm, that he who, as I have done, will undertake to winnow this grain from the chaff, will find it not to require a moment's consideration. The parts fall asunder of themselves, as would those of an image of metal and clay.

There are, I acknowledge, passages not free from objection, which we may, with probability, ascribe to Jesus Himself; but claiming indulgence from the

circumstances under which He acted. His object was the reformation of some articles in the religion of the Jews, as taught by Moses. That sect had presented for the object of their worship, a Being of terrific character, cruel, vindictive, capricious, and unjust. Jesus, taking for His type the best qualities of the human head and heart, wisdom, justice, goodness, and adding to them power, ascribed all of these, but in infinite perfection, to the Supreme Being, and formed Him really worthy of their adoration. Moses had either not believed in a future state of existence, or had not thought it essential to be explicitly taught to his people. Jesus inculcated that doctrine with emphasis and precision. Moses had bound the Jews to many idle ceremonies, mummeries, and observances, of no effect towards producing the social utilities which constitute the essence of virtue; Jesus exposed their futility and insignificance. The one instilled into his people the most anti-social spirit towards other nations; the other preached philanthropy and universal charity and benevolence. The office of reformer of the superstitions of a nation, is ever dangerous. Jesus had to walk on the perilous confines of reason and religion; and a step to right or left might place Him within the grasp of the priests of the superstition, a bloodthirsty race, as cruel and remorseless as the Being whom they represented as the family God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob, and the local God of Israel. They were constantly laying snares, too, to entangle Him in the

web of the law. He was justifiable, therefore, in avoiding these by evasions, by sophisms, by misconstructions and misapplications of scraps of the prophets, and in defending Himself with these their own weapons, as sufficient, *ad homines*, at least. That Jesus did not mean to impose Himself on mankind as the Son of God, physically speaking, I have been convinced by the writings of men more learned than myself in that lore. But that He might conscientiously believe Himself inspired from above, is very possible. The whole religion of the Jew, inculcated on him from his infancy, was founded in the belief of divine inspiration. The fumes of the most disordered imaginations were recorded in their religious code, as special communications of the Deity; and as it could not but happen that, in the course of ages, events would now and then turn up to which some of these vague rhapsodies might be accommodated by the aid of allegories, figures, types, and other tricks upon words, they have not only preserved their credit with the Jews of all subsequent times, but are the foundation of much of the religions of those who have schismatised from them. Elevated by the enthusiasm of a warm and pure heart, conscious of the high strains of an eloquence which had not been taught Him, he might readily mistake the coruscations of His own fine genius for inspirations of an higher order. This belief carried, therefore, no more personal imputation, than the belief of Socrates, that himself was under the care and

admonitions of a guardian Dæmon. And how many of our wisest men still believe in the reality of these inspirations, while perfectly sane on all other subjects. Excusing, therefore, on these considerations, those passages in the Gospels which seem to bear marks of weakness in Jesus, ascribing to Him what alone is consistent with the great and pure character of which the same writings furnish proofs, and to their proper authors their own trivialities and imbecilities, I think myself authorized to conclude the purity and distinction of His character, in opposition to the impostures which those authors would fix upon Him; and that the postulate of my former letter is no more than is granted in all other historical works.

Mr. Correa is here, on his farewell visit to us. He has been much pleased with the plan and progress of our University, and has given some valuable hints to its botanical branch. He goes to do, I hope, much good in his new country; the public instruction there, as I understand, being within the department destined for him. He is not without dissatisfaction, and reasonable dissatisfaction too, with the piracies of Baltimore; but his justice and friendly dispositions will, I am sure, distinguish between the iniquities of a few plunderers, and the sound principles of our country at large, and of our government especially. From many conversations with him, I hope he sees, and will promote in his new situation, the advantages of a cordial fraternization among all the Ameri-

can nations, and the importance of their coalescing in an American system of policy, totally independent of and unconnected with that of Europe. The day is not distant, when we may formally require a meridian of partition through the ocean which separates the two hemispheres, on the hither side of which no European gun shall ever be heard, nor an American on the other; and when, during the rage of the eternal wars of Europe, the lion and the lamb, within our regions, shall lie down together in peace. The excess of population in Europe, and want of room, render war, in their opinion, necessary to keep down that excess of numbers. Here, room is abundant, population scanty, and peace the necessary means for producing men, to whom the redundant soil is offering the means of life and happiness. The principles of society there and here, then, are radically different, and I hope no American patriot will ever lose sight of the essential policy of interdicting in the seas and territories of both Americas, the ferocious and sanguinary contests of Europe. I wish to see this coalition begun. I am earnest for an agreement with the maritime powers of Europe, assigning them the task of keeping down the piracies of their seas and the cannibalisms of the African coasts, and to us, the suppression of the same enormities within our seas; and for this purpose, I should rejoice to see the fleets of Brazil and the United States riding together as brethren of the same family, and pursuing the same object. And indeed it would be

of happy augury to begin at once this concert of action here, on the invitation of either to the other government, while the way might be preparing for withdrawing our cruisers from Europe, and preventing naval collisions there which daily endanger our peace.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Accept assurances of the sincerity of my friendship and respect for you.

TO DOCTOR THOMAS COOPER.

MONTICELLO, August 14, 1820.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 24th ultimo was received in due time, and I shall rejoice indeed if Mr. Elliot and Mr. Nulty are joined to you in the institution at Columbia, which now becomes of immediate interest to me. Mr. Stack has given notice to his first class that he shall dismiss them on the 10th of the next month, and his mathematical assistant also at the same time, being determined to take only small boys in future. My grandson, Eppes, is of the first class; and I have proposed to his father to send him to Columbia, rather than anywhere northwardly. I am obliged, therefore, to ask of you by what day he ought to be there, so as to be at the commencement of what they call a session, and to be so good as to do this by the first mail, as I shall set out to Bedford within about a fortnight. He is so far advanced in Greek and Latin that he will be able to

pursue them by himself hereafter; and being between eighteen and nineteen years of age he has no time to lose. I propose that he shall commence immediately with the mathematics and natural philosophy, to be followed by astronomy, chemistry, mineralogy, botany, natural history. It would be time lost for him to attend professors of ethics, metaphysics, logic, etc. The first of these may be as well acquired in the closet as from living lecturers; and supposing the two last to mean the science of *mind*, the simple reading of Locke, Tracy, and Stewart will give him as much in that branch as is *real* science. A relation of his (Mr. Baker) and classmate will go with him.

I hope and believe you are mistaken in supposing the reign of fanaticism to be on the advance. I think it certainly declining. It was first excited artificially by the sovereigns of Europe as an engine of opposition to Bonaparte and to France. It rose to a great height there, and became indeed a powerful engine of loyalism, and of support to their governments. But that loyalism is giving way to very different dispositions, and its prompter, fanaticism, is vanishing with it. In the meantime it had been wafted across the Atlantic, and chiefly from England, with their other fashions, but it is here also on the wane. The ambitious sect of Presbyterians indeed, the Loyalists of our country, spare no pains to keep it up. But their views of ascendency over all other sects in the United States seem to excite alarm in all, and to unite them as against a common and threatening

enemy. And although the Unitarianism they impute to you is heterodoxy with all of them, I suspect the other sects will admit it to their alliance in order to strengthen the phalanx of opposition against the enterprises of their more aspiring antagonists. Although spiritualism is most prevalent with all these sects, yet with none of them, I presume, is materialism declared heretical. Mr. Locke, on whose authority they often plume themselves, openly maintained the materialism of the soul; and charged with blasphemy those who denied that it was in the power of an Almighty Creator to endow with the faculty of thought any composition of matter He might think fit. The fathers of the church of the three first centuries generally, if not universally, were materialists, extending it even to the Creator Himself; nor indeed do I know exactly[1] in what age of the Christian church the heresy of spiritualism was introduced. Huet, in his commentaries on Origen,[2] says, "Deus igitur, cui anima similis est, juxta Origenem, reapse corporalis est, sed graviorum tantum ratione corporum incorporeus."[3] St. Macari,[4] as speaking of angels, says, "quam vis enim subtilia sint, tamen in substantia, forma, et figura, secundum tenuitatem naturæ eorum corpora sunt tenuia, quemadmodum et hoc corpus in substantia sua crassum et solidum

[1] I believe by Athanasius and the Council of Nicæa.
[2] Ocellus de d'Argens, p. 97.
[3] Enfield, vi. 3.
[4] Ib. 105.

est."[1] St. Justin Martyr says expressly, "το θειον φαμεν ειναι ασωματον, ουκ δε εστιν ασωματον."

Tertullian's words are, "quid enim Deus nisi corpus?" and again, "quis autem negabit Deum esse corpus? et si deus spiritus, spiritus etiam corpus est sui generis, in suâ effigie," and that the soul is matter he adduces the following tangible proof: "in ipso ultimo voluptatis aestu, quo genitale virus expellitur, nonne aliquid de animâ sentimus exire?"[2] The holy father thus asserting, and, as it would seem, from his own feelings, that the sperm infused into the female matrix deposits there the matter and germ of both soul and body, conjunctim, of the new fœtus. Although I do not pretend to be familiar with these fathers, and give the preceding quotations at second hand, yet I learn from authors whom I respect, that not only those I have named, but St. Augustin,[3] St. Basil, Lactantius, Tatian, Athenagoras, and others, concurred in the materiality of the soul. Our modern doctors would hardly venture or wish to condemn their fathers as heretics, the main pillars of their fabric resting on their shoulders.

In the consultations of the Visitors of the University on the subject of releasing you from your engagement with us, although one or two members seemed alarmed at this cry of "fire" from the Presbyterian pulpits, yet the real ground of our decision was that our funds were in fact hypotheticated for five

[1] Timæus, 17. Enfield, vi. 3.
[2] Hist. des Saints, 2, c. 4, p. 212, 215.
[3] Ocellus, 90.

or six years to redeem the loan we had reluctantly made; and although we hoped and trusted that the ensuing legislature would remit the debt and liberate our funds, yet it was not just, on this possibility, to stand in the way of your looking out for a more certain provision. The completing all our buildings for professors and students by the autumn of the ensuing year, is now secured by sufficient contracts, and our confidence is most strong that neither the State nor their legislature will bear to see those buildings shut up for five or six years, when they have the money in hand, and actually appropriated to the object of education, which would open their doors at once for the reception of their sons, now waiting and calling aloud for that institution. The legislature meets on the 1st Monday of December, and before Christmas we shall know what are their intentions. If such as we expect, we shall then immediately take measures to engage our professors and bring them into place the ensuing autumn or early winter. My hope is that you will be able and willing to keep yourself uncommitted, to take your place among them about that time; and I can assure you there is not a voice among us which will not be cordially given for it. I think, too, I may add, that if the Presbyterian opposition should not die by that time, it will be directed at once against the whole institution, and not amuse itself with nibbling at a single object. It did that only because there was no other, and they might think it politic to mask

their designs on the body of the fortress, under the ——— of a battery against a single bastion. I will not despair then of the avail of your services in an establishment which I contemplate as the future bulwark of the human mind in this hemisphere. God bless you and preserve you *multos annos*.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

MONTICELLO, August 15, 1820.

I am a great defaulter, my dear Sir, in our correspondence, but prostrate health rarely permits me to write; and when it does, matters of business imperiously press their claims. I am getting better however, slowly, swelled legs being now the only serious symptom, and these, I believe, proceed from extreme debility. I can walk but little; but I ride six or eight miles a day without fatigue; and within a few days, I shall endeavor to visit my other home, after a twelvemonth's absence from it. Our University, four miles distant, gives me frequent exercise, and the oftener, as I direct its architecture. Its plan is unique, and it is becoming an object of curiosity for the traveler. I have lately had an opportunity of reading a critique on this institution in your North American Review of January last, having been not without anxiety to see what that able work would say of us; and I was relieved on finding in it much coincidence of opinion, and even where criticisms were indulged, I found they would have been obviated

had the developments of our plan been fuller. But these were restrained by the character of the paper reviewed, being merely a report of outlines, not a detailed treatise, and addressed to a legislative body, not to a learned academy. For example, as an inducement to introduce the Anglo-Saxon into our plan, it was said that it would reward amply the *few weeks* of attention which alone would be requisite for its attainment; leaving both term and degree under an indefinite expression, because I know that not much time is necessary to attain it to an useful degree sufficient to give such instruction in the etymologies of our language as may satisfy ordinary students, while more time would be requisite for those who should propose to attain a critical knowledge of it. In a letter which I had occasion to write to Mr. Crofts, who sent you, I believe, as well as myself, a copy of his treatise on the English and German languages, as preliminary to an etymological dictionary he meditated, I went into explanations with him of an easy process for simplifying the study of the Anglo-Saxon, and lessening the terrors and difficulties presented by its rude alphabet, and unformed orthography. But this is a subject beyond the bounds of a letter, as it was beyond the bounds of a report to the legislature. Mr. Crofts died, I believe, before any progress was made in the work he had projected.

The reviewer expresses doubt, rather than decision, on our placing military and naval architecture in the department of pure mathematics. Military archi-

tecture embraces fortification and fieldworks, which, with their bastions, curtains, hornworks, redoubts, etc., are based on a technical combination of lines and angles. These are adapted to offence and defence, with and against the effects of bombs, balls, escalades, etc. But lines and angles make the sum of elementary geometry, a branch of pure mathematics; and the direction of the bombs, balls, and other projectiles, the necessary appendages of military works, although no part of their architecture, belong to the conic sections, a branch of transcendental geometry. Diderot and D'Alembert, therefore, in their *Arbor Scientiæ*, have placed military architecture in the department of elementary geometry. Naval architecture teaches the best form and construction of vessels; for which best form it has recourse to the question of the solid of least resistance; a problem of transcendental geometry. And its appurtenant projectiles belong to the same branch, as in the preceding case. It is true, that so far as respects the action of the water on the rudder and oars, and of the wind on the sails, it may be placed in the department of mechanics, as Diderot and D'Alembert have done; but belonging quite as much to geometry, and allied in its military character to military architecture, it simplified our plan to place both under the same head. These views are so obvious, that I am sure they would have required but a second thought, to reconcile the reviewer to their *location* under the head of pure mathematics. For this word *location*,

see Bailey, Johnson, Sheridan, Walker, etc. But if dictionaries are to be the arbiters of language, in which of them shall we find *neologism?* No matter. It is a good word, well sounding, obvious, and expresses an idea, which would otherwise require circumlocution. The reviewer was justifiable, therefore, in using it; although he noted at the same time, as unauthoritative, *centrality*, *grade*, *sparse;* all which have been long used in common speech and writing. I am a friend to *neology*. It is the only way to give to a language copiousness and euphony. Without it we should still be held to the vocabulary of Alfred or of Ulphilas; and held to their state of science also: for I am sure they had no words which could have conveyed the ideas of oxygen, cotyledons, zoophytes, magnetism, electricity, hyaline, and thousands of others expressing ideas not then existing, nor of possible communication in the state of their language. What a language has the French become since the date of their revolution, by the free introduction of new words! The most copious and eloquent in the living world; and equal to the Greek, had not that been regularly modifiable almost *ad infinitum*. Their rule was, that whenever their language furnished or adopted a root, all its branches, in every part of speech, were legitimated by giving them their appropriate terminations. Αδελφος, αδελφη, αδελφιδιον, αδελφοτης, αδελφιξις, αδελφιδης, αδελφικος, αδελφιζω, αδελφικως. And this should be the law of every language. Thus, having adopted the adjec-

tive *fraternal*, it is a root which should legitimate *fraternity*, *fraternation*, *fraternisation*, *fraternism*, *to fraternate*, *fraternise*, *fraternally*. And give the word *neologism* to our language, as a root, and it should give us its fellow substantives, *neology*, *neologist*, *neologisation;* its adjectives, *neologous*, *neological*, *neologistical;* its verb, *neologise;* and adverb, *neologically*. Dictionaries are but the depositories of words already legitimated by usage. Society is the workshop in which new ones are elaborated. When an individual uses a new word, if ill formed, it is rejected in society; if well formed, adopted, and after due time, laid up in the depository of dictionaries. And if, in this process of sound neologisation, our trans-Atlantic brethren shall not choose to accompany us, we may furnish, after the Ionians, a second example of a colonial dialect improving on its primitive.

But enough of criticism: let me turn to your puzzling letter of May the 12th, on matter, spirit, motion, etc. Its crowd of scepticisms kept me from sleep. I read it, and laid it down; read it, and laid it down, again and again; and to give rest to my mind, I was obliged to recur ultimately to my habitual anodyne, "I feel, therefore I exist." I feel bodies which are not myself: there are other existences then. I call them *matter*. I feel them changing place. This gives me *motion*. Where there is an absence of matter, I call it *void*, or *nothing*, or *immaterial space*. On the basis of sensation, of matter and motion, we

may erect the fabric of all the certainties we can have or need. I can conceive *thought* to be an action of a particular organization of matter, formed for that purpose by its Creator, as well as that *attraction* is an action of matter, or *magnetism* of loadstone. When he who denies to the Creator the power of endowing matter with the mode of action called *thinking*, shall show how He could endow the sun with the mode of action called *attraction*, which reins the planets in the track of their orbits, or how an absence of matter can have a will, and by that will put matter into motion, then the Materialist may be lawfully required to explain the process by which matter exercises the faculty of thinking. When once we quit the basis of sensation, all is in the wind. To talk of *immaterial* existences, is to talk of *nothings*. To say that the human soul, angels, God, are immaterial, is to say, they are *nothings*, or that there is no God, no angels, no soul. I cannot reason otherwise: but I believe I am supported in my creed of materialism by the Lockes, the Tracys and the Stewarts. At what age [1] of the Christian Church this heresy of *immaterialism*, or masked atheism, crept in, I do not exactly know. But a heresy it certainly is. Jesus taught nothing of it. He told us, indeed, that "God is a Spirit," but He has not defined what a spirit is, nor said that it is not *matter*. And the ancient fathers generally, of the three first centuries, held it to be matter, light and thin indeed, an etherial gas;

[1] That of Athanasius and the Council of Nicæa, anno 324.

but still matter. Origen says, "Deus se ipse corporalis est; sed graviorum tantum corporum ratione, incorporeus." Tertullian, "quid enim Deus nisi corpus?" And again, "quis negabit Deum esse corpus? Etsi Deus spiritus, spiritus etiam corpus est, sui generis in suâ effigie." St. Justin Martyr, "το θειον φαμεν ειναι ασωματον· γκ 'οτι ασωματον'—επειδη δε τομη κρατεισθαι ὑπο τινος τ̄ κρατεισθαι τιμιωτερον εϛι δια τ̄το καλ̄μεν αυτον ασωματον." And St. Macarius, speaking of angels, says, "quamvis enim subtilia sint, tamen in substantia, forma et figurâ, secundum tenuitatem naturæ eorum, corpora sunt tenuia." And St. Augustin, St. Basil, Lactantius, Tatian, Athenagoras and others, with whose writings I pretend not a familiarity, are said by those who are better acquainted with them, to deliver the same doctrine. (Enfield x. 3, 1.) Turn to your Ocellus d'Argens, 97, 105, and to his Timæus, 17, for these quotations. In England, these Immaterialists might have been burnt until the 29 Car. 2, when the writ *de hæretico comburendo* was abolished; and here until the Revolution, that statute not having extended to us. All heresies being now done away with us, these schismatists are merely atheists, differing from the material atheist only in their belief, that "nothing made something," and from the material deist, who believes that matter alone can operate on matter.

Rejecting all organs of information, therefore, but my senses, I rid myself of the pyrrhonisms with which an indulgence in speculations hyperphysical

and antiphysical, so uselessly occupy and disquiet the mind. A single sense may indeed be sometimes deceived, but rarely; and never all our senses together, with their faculty of reasoning. They evidence realities, and there are enough of these for all the purposes of life, without plunging into the fathomless abyss of dreams and phantasms. I am satisfied, and sufficiently occupied with the things which are, without tormenting or troubling myself about those which may indeed be, but of which I have no evidence. I am sure that I really know many, many things, and none more surely than that I love you with all my heart, and pray for the continuance of your life until you shall be tired of it yourself.

TO WILLIAM CHARLES JARVIS.

MONTICELLO, September 28, 1820.

I thank you, Sir, for the copy of your Republican which you have been so kind as to send me, and I should have acknowledged it sooner but that I am just returned home after a long absence. I have not yet had time to read it seriously, but in looking over it cursorily I see much in it to approve, and shall be glad if it shall lead our youth to the practice of thinking on such subjects and for themselves. That it will have this tendency may be expected, and for that reason I feel an urgency to note what I deem an error in it, the more requiring notice as your opinion

is strengthened by that of many others. You seem, in pages 84 and 148, to consider the judges as the ultimate arbiters of all constitutional questions; a very dangerous doctrine indeed, and one which would place us under the despotism of an oligarchy. Our judges are as honest as other men, and not more so. They have, with others, the same passions for party, for power, and the privilege of their corps. Their maxim is "*boni judicis est ampliare jurisdictionem*," and their power the more dangerous as they are in office for life, and not responsible, as the other functionaries are, to the elective control. The Constitution has erected no such single tribunal, knowing that to whatever hands confided, with the corruptions of time and party, its members would become despots. It has more wisely made all the departments co-equal and co-sovereign within themselves. If the legislature fails to pass laws for a census, for paying the judges and other officers of government, for establishing a militia, for naturalization as prescribed by the Constitution, or if they fail to meet in congress, the judges cannot issue their mandamus to them; if the President fails to supply the place of a judge, to appoint other civil or military officers, to issue requisite commissions, the judges cannot force him. They can issue their mandamus or distringas to no executive or legislative officer to enforce the fulfilment of their official duties, any more than the President or legislature may issue orders to the judges or their officers. Betrayed by English example,

and unaware, as it should seem, of the control of our Constitution in this particular, they have at times overstepped their limit by undertaking to command executive officers in the discharge of their executive duties; but the Constitution, in keeping three departments distinct and independent, restrains the authority of the judges to judiciary organs, as it does the executive and legislative to executive and legislative organs. The judges certainly have more frequent occasion to act on constitutional questions, because the laws of *meum* and *tuum* and of criminal action, forming the great mass of the system of law, constitute their particular department. When the legislative or executive functionaries act unconstitutionally, they are responsible to the people in their elective capacity. The exemption of the judges from that is quite dangerous enough. I know no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education. This is the true corrective of abuses of constitutional power. Pardon me, Sir, for this difference of opinion. My personal interest in such questions is entirely extinct, but not my wishes for the longest possible continuance of our government on its pure principles; if the three powers maintain their mutual independence on each other it may last long, but not so if either can assume the authorities

of the other. I ask your candid re-consideration of this subject, and am sufficiently sure you will form a candid conclusion. Accept the assurance of my great respect.

TO CHARLES PINCKNEY.

MONTICELLO, September 30, 1820.

DEAR SIR,—An absence of some time from home has occasioned me to be thus late in acknowledging the receipt of your favor of the 6th, and I see in it with pleasure evidences of your continued health and application to business. It is now, I believe, about twenty years since I had the pleasure of seeing you, and we are apt, in such cases, to lose sight of time, and to conceive that our friends remain stationary at the same point of health and vigor as when we last saw them. So I perceive by your letter you think with respect to myself, but twenty years added to fifty-seven make quite a different man. To threescore and seventeen add two years of prostrate health, and you have the old, infirm, and nerveless body I now am, unable to write but with pain, and unwilling to think without necessity. In this state I leave the world and its affairs to the young and energetic, and resign myself to their care, of whom I have endeavored to take care when young. I read but one newspaper and that of my own State, and more for its advertisements than its news. I have not read a speech in Congress for some years.

I have heard, indeed, of the questions of the tariff and Missouri, and formed *prima facie* opinions on them, but without investigation. As to the tariff, I should say put down all banks, admit none but a *metallic circulation*, that will take its proper level with the like circulation in other countries, and then our manufacturers may work in fair competition with those of other countries, and the import duties which the government may lay for the purposes of revenue will so far place them above equal competition. The Missouri question is a mere party trick. The leaders of federalism, defeated in their schemes of obtaining power by rallying partisans to the principle of monarchism, a principle of personal, not of local division, have changed their tack, and thrown out another barrel to the whale. They are taking advantage of the virtuous feelings of the people to effect a division of parties by a geographical line; they expect that this will ensure them, on local principles, the majority they could never obtain on principles of federalism; but they are still putting their shoulder to the wrong wheel; they are wasting Jeremiads on the miseries of slavery, as if we were advocates for it. Sincerity in their declamations should direct their efforts to the true point of difficulty, and unite their counsels with ours in devising some reasonable and practicable plan of getting rid of it. Some of these leaders, if they could attain the power, their ambition would rather use it to keep the Union together, but others have ever had in view

its separation. If they push it to that, they will find the line of separation very different from their 36° of latitude, and as manufacturing and navigating States, they will have quarrelled with their bread and butter, and I fear not that after a little trial they will think better of it, and return to the embraces of their natural and best friends. But this scheme of party I leave to those who are to live under its consequences. We who have gone before have performed an honest duty, by putting in the power of our successors a state of happiness which no nation ever before had within their choice. If that choice is to throw it away, the dead will have neither the power nor the right to control them. I must hope, nevertheless, that the mass of our honest and well-meaning brethren of the other States, will discover the use which designing leaders are making of their best feelings, and will see the precipice to which they are led, before they take the fatal leap. God grant it, and to you health and happiness.

TO RICHARD RUSH, ESQ.

MONTICELLO, October 20, 1820.

DEAR SIR,—In your favor of May 3d, which I have now to acknowledge, you so kindly proffered your attentions to any little matters I might have on that side of the water, that I take the liberty of availing myself of this proof of your goodness so far as to request you to put the enclosed catalogue in the

hands of some *honest* bookseller of London, who will procure and forward the books to me, with care and good faith. They should be packed in a cheap trunk, and not put on ship-board until April, as they would be liable to damage on a winter passage. I ask an *honest* correspondent in that line, because, when we begin to import for the library of our University, we shall need one worthy of entire confidence.

I send this letter open to my correspondent in Richmond, Captain Bernard Peyton, with a request that he will put into it a bill of exchange on London of £40 sterling, which of course, therefore, I cannot describe to you by naming drawer and drawee. He will also forward, by other conveyance, the duplicate and triplicate as usual. This sum would more than cover the cost of the books written for, according to their prices stated in printed catalogues; but as books have risen with other things in price, I have enlarged the printed amount by about 15 per cent. to cover any rise. Still, should it be insufficient, the bookseller is requested to dock the catalogue to the amount of the remittance.

I have no news to give you; for I have none but from the newspapers, and believing little of that myself, it would be an unworthy present to my friends. But the important news lies now on your side of the Atlantic. England, in throes from a trifle, as it would seem, but that trifle the symptom of an irremediable disease proceeding from a long course of exhaustion by efforts and burdens beyond

her natural strength; France agonizing between royalists and constitutionalists; the other States of Europe pressing on to revolution and the rights of man, and the colossal powers of Russia and Austria marshalled against them. These are more than specks of hurricane in the horizon of the world. You, who are young, may live to see its issue; the beginning only is for my time. Nor is our side of the water entirely untroubled, the boisterous sea of liberty is never without a wave. A hideous evil, the magnitude of which is seen, and at a distance only, by the one party, and more sorely felt and sincerely deplored by the other, from the difficulty of the cure, divides us at this moment too angrily. The attempt by one party to prohibit willing States from sharing the evil, is thought by the other to render desperate, by accumulation, the hope of its final eradication. If a little time, however, is given to both parties to cool, and to dispel their visionary fears, they will see that concurring in sentiment as to the evil, moral and political, the duty and interest of both is to concur also in divining a practicable process of cure. Should time not be given, and the schism be pushed to separation, it will be for a short term only; two or three years' trial will bring them back, like quarrelling lovers to renewed embraces, and increased affections. The experiment of separation would soon prove to both that they had mutually miscalculated their best interests. And even were the parties in Congress to secede in a passion, the

soberer people would call a convention and cement again the severance attempted by the insanity of their functionaries. With this consoling view, my greatest grief would be for the fatal effect of such an event on the hopes and happiness of the world. We exist, and are quoted, as standing proofs that a government, so modelled as to rest continually on the will of the whole society, is a practicable government. Were we to break to pieces, it would damp the hopes and the efforts of the good, and give triumph to those of the bad through the whole enslaved world. As members, therefore, of the universal society of mankind, and standing in high and responsible relation with them, it is our sacred duty to suppress passion among ourselves, and not to blast the confidence we have inspired of proof that a government of reason is better than one of force. This letter is not of facts, but of opinions, as you will observe; and although the converse is generally the most acceptable, I do not know that, in your situation, the opinions of your countrymen may not be as desirable to be known to you as facts. They constitute, indeed, moral facts, as important as physical ones to the attention of the public functionary. Wishing you a long career to the services you may render your country, and that it may be a career of happiness and prosperity to yourself, I salute you with affectionate attachment and respect.

TO J. CORREA DE SERRA.

MONTICELLO, October 24, 1820.

Your kind letter, dear Sir, of October 12th, was handed to me by Dr. Cooper, and was the first correction of an erroneous belief that you had long since left our shores. Such had been Colonel Randolph's opinion, and his had governed mine. I received your adieu with feelings of sincere regret at the loss we were to sustain, and particularly of those friendly visits by which you had made me so happy. I shall feel, too, the want of your counsel and approbation in what we are doing and have yet to do in our University, the last of my mortal cares, and the last service I can render my country. But turning from myself, throwing egotism behind me, and looking to your happiness, it is a duty and consolation of friendship to consider that that may be promoted by your return to your own country. There I hope you will receive the honors and rewards you merit, and which may make the rest of your life easy and happy; there too you will render precious services by promoting the science of your country, and blessing its future generations with the advantages that bestows. Nor even there shall we lose all the benefits of your friendship; for this motive, as well as the love of your own country, will be an incitement to promote that intimate harmony between our two nations which is so much the interest of both. Nothing is so important as that America shall

separate herself from the systems of Europe, and establish one of her own. Our circumstances, our pursuits, our interests, are distinct, the principles of our policy should be so also. All entanglements with that quarter of the globe should be avoided if we mean that peace and justice shall be the polar stars of the American societies. I had written a letter to a friend while you were here, in a part of which these sentiments were expressed, and I had made an extract from it to put into your hands, as containing my creed on that subject. You had left us, however, in the morning earlier than I had been aware; still I enclose it to you, because it would be a leading principle with me, had I longer to live. During six and thirty years that I have been in situations to attend to the conduct and characters of foreign nations, I have found the government of Portugal the most just, inoffensive and unambitious of any one with which we had concern, without a single exception. I am sure that this is the character of ours also. Two such nations can never wish to quarrel with each other. Subordinate officers may be negligent, may have their passions and partialities, and be criminally remiss in preventing the enterprises of the lawless banditti who are to be found in every seaport of every country. The late piratical depredations which your commerce has suffered as well as ours, and that of other nations, seem to have been committed by renegado rovers of several nations, French, English, American, which

they as well as we have not been careful enough to suppress. I hope our Congress now about to meet will strengthen the measures of suppression. Of their disposition to do it there can be no doubt; for all men of moral principle must be shocked at these atrocities. I had repeated conversations on this subject with the President, while at his seat in this neighborhood. No man can abhor these enormities more deeply. I trust it will not have been in the power of abandoned rovers, nor yet of negligent functionaries, to disturb the harmony of two nations so much disposed to mutual friendship, and interested in it. To this, my dear friend, you can be mainly instrumental, and I know your patriotism and philanthropy too well to doubt your best efforts to cement us. In these I pray for your success, and that heaven may long preserve you in health and prosperity to do all the good to mankind to which your enlightened and benevolent mind disposes you. Of the continuance of my affectionate friendship, with that of my life, and of its fervent wishes for your happiness, accept my sincere assurance.

TO THE REVEREND JARED SPARKS.

MONTICELLO, November 4, 1820.

SIR,—Your favor of September 18th is just received, with the book accompanying it. Its delay was owing to that of the box of books from Mr. Guegan, in which it was packed. Being just set-

ting out on a journey I have time only to look over the summary of contents. In this I see nothing in which I am likely to differ materially from you. I hold the precepts of Jesus, as delivered by Himself, to be the most pure, benevolent, and sublime which have ever been preached to man. I adhere to the principles of the first age; and consider all subsequent innovations as corruptions of His religion, having no foundation in what came from Him. The metaphysical insanities of Athanasius, of Loyola, and of Calvin, are, to my understanding, mere relapses into polytheism, differing from paganism only by being more unintelligible. The religion of Jesus is founded in the Unity of God, and this principle chiefly, gave it triumph over the rabble of heathen gods then acknowledged. Thinking men of all nations rallied readily to the doctrine of one only God, and embraced it with the pure morals which Jesus inculcated. If the freedom of religion, guaranteed to us by law *in theory*, can ever rise *in practice* under the overbearing inquisition of public opinion, truth will prevail over fanaticism, and the genuine doctrines of Jesus, so long perverted by His pseudo-priests, will again be restored to their original purity. This reformation will advance with the other improvements of the human mind, but too late for me to witness it. Accept my thanks for your book, in which I shall read with pleasure your developments of the subject, and with them the assurance of my high respect.

TO JOSEPH C. CABELL.

POPLAR FOREST, November 28, 1820.

DEAR SIR,—I sent in due time the Report of the Visitors to the Governor, with a request that he would endeavor to convene the Literary Board in time to lay it before the legislature on the second day of their session. It was enclosed in a letter which will explain itself to you. If delivered before the crowd of other business presses on them, they may act on it immediately, and before there will have been time for unfriendly combinations and manoeuvres by the enemies of the institution. I enclose you now a paper presenting some views which may be useful to you in conversations, to rebut exaggerated estimates of what our institution is to cost, and reproaches of deceptive estimates. One hundred and sixty-two thousand three hundred and sixty-four dollars will be about the cost of the whole establishment, when completed. Not an office at Washington has cost less. The single building of the courthouse of Henrico has cost nearly that; and the massive walls of the millions of bricks of William and Mary could not now be built for a less sum.

Surely Governor Clinton's display of the gigantic efforts of New York towards the education of her citizens, will stimulate the pride as well as the patriotism of our legislature, to look to the reputation and safety of their own country, to rescue it from the degradation of becoming the Barbary of the Union,

and of falling into the ranks of our own negroes. To that condition it is fast sinking. We shall be in the hands of the other States, what our indigenous predecessors were when invaded by the science and arts of Europe. The mass of education in Virginia, before the Revolution, placed her with the foremost of her sister colonies. What is her education now? Where is it? The little we have we import, like beggars, from other States; or import their beggars to bestow on us their miserable crumbs. And what is wanting to restore us to our station among our confederates? Not more money from the people. Enough has been raised by them, and appropriated to this very object. It is that it should be employed understandingly, and for their greatest good. That good requires, that while they are instructed in general, competently to the common business of life, others should employ their genius with necessary information to the useful arts, to inventions for saving labor and increasing our comforts, to nourishing our health, to civil government, military science, etc.

Would it not have a good effect for the friends of this University to take the lead in proposing and effecting a practical scheme of elementary schools? To assume the character of the friends, rather than the opponents of that object. The present plan has appropriated to the primary schools forty-five thousand dollars for three years, making one hundred and thirty-five thousand dollars. I should be glad to know if this sum has educated one hundred and

thirty-five poor children? I doubt it much. And if it has, they have cost us one thousand dollars apiece for what might have been done with thirty dollars. Supposing the literary revenue to be sixty thousand dollars, I think it demonstrable, that this sum, equally divided between the two objects, would amply suffice for both. One hundred counties, divided into about twelve wards each, on an average, and a school in each ward of perhaps ten children, would be one thousand and two hundred schools, distributed proportionably over the surface of the State. The inhabitants of each ward, meeting together (as when they work on the roads), building good log-houses for their school and teacher, and contributing for his provisions, rations of pork, beef, and corn, in the proportion each of his other taxes, would thus lodge and feed him without feeling it; and those of them who are able, paying for the tuition of their own children, would leave no call on the public fund but for the tuition fee of, here and there, an accidental pauper, who would still be fed and lodged with his parents. Suppose this fee ten dollars, and three hundred dollars apportioned to a county on an average, (more or less proportioned,) would there be thirty such paupers for every county? I think not. The truth is, that the want of common education with us is not from our poverty, but from want of an orderly system. More money is now paid for the education of a part, than would be paid for that of the whole, if systematically arranged. Six thousand

common schools in New York, fifty pupils in each, three hundred thousand in all; one hundred and sixty thousand dollars annually paid to the masters; forty established academies, with two thousand two hundred and eighteen pupils; and five colleges, with seven hundred and eighteen students; to which last classes of institutions seven hundred and twenty thousand dollars have been given; and the whole appropriations for education estimated at two and a half millions of dollars! What a pigmy to this is Virginia become, with a population almost equal to that of New York! And whence this difference? From the difference their rulers set on the value of knowledge, and the prosperity it produces. But still, if a pigmy, let her do what a pigmy may do. If among fifty children in each of the six thousand schools of New York, there are only paupers enough to employ twenty-five dollars of public money to each school, surely among the ten children of each of our one thousand and two hundred schools, the same sum of twenty-five dollars to each school will teach its paupers, (five times as much as to the same number in New York,) and will amount for the whole to thirty thousand dollars a year, the one-half only of our literary revenue.

Do then, dear Sir, think of this, and engage our friends to take in hand the whole subject. It will reconcile the friends of the elementary schools, and none are more warmly so than myself, lighten the difficulties of the University, and promote in every

order of men the degree of instruction proportioned to their condition, and to their views in life. It will combine with the mass of our force, a wise direction of it, which will insure to our country its future prosperity and safety. I had formerly thought that visitors of the school might be chosen by the county, and charged to provide teachers for every ward, and to superintend them. I now think it would be better for every ward to choose its own resident visitor, whose business it would be to keep a teacher in the ward, to superintend the school, and to call meetings of the ward for all purposes relating to it; their accounts to be settled, and wards laid off by the courts. I think ward elections better for many reasons, one of which is sufficient, that it will keep elementary education out of the hands of fanaticising preachers, who, in county elections, would be universally chosen, and the predominant sect of the county would possess itself of all its schools.

A wrist stiffened by an ancient accident, now more so by the effect of age, renders writing a slow and irksome operation with me. I cannot, therefore, present these views, by separate letters to each of our colleagues in the legislature, but must pray you to communicate them to Mr. Johnson and General Breckenridge, and to request them to consider this as equally meant for them. Mr. Gordon being the local representative of the University, and among its most zealous friends, would be a more useful second to General Breckenridge in the House of Dele-

gates, by a free communication of what concerns the University, with which he has had little opportunity of becoming acquainted. So, also, would it be to Mr. Rives, who would be a friendly advocate.

Accept the assurances of my constant and affectionate esteem and respect.

TO JAMES MADISON.

POPLAR FOREST, November 29, 1820.

DEAR SIR,—The enclosed letter from our ancient friend Tench Coxe, came unfortunately to Monticello after I had left it, and has had a dilatory passage to this place, where I received it yesterday, and obey its injunction of immediate transmission to you. We should have recognized the style even without a signature, and although so written as to be much of it indecipherable. This is a sample of the effects we may expect from the late mischievous law vacating every four years nearly all the executive offices of the government. It saps the constitutional and salutary functions of the President, and introduces a principle of intrigue and corruption, which will soon leaven the mass, not only of Senators, but of citizens. It is more baneful than the attempt which failed in the beginning of the government, to make all officers irremovable but with the consent of the Senate. This places, every four years, all appointments under their power, and even obliges them to act on every one nomination. It will keep in constant excitement

all the hungry cormorants for office, render them, as well as those in place, sycophants to their Senators, engage these in eternal intrigue to turn out one and put in another, in cabals to swap work; and make of them what all executive directories become, mere sinks of corruption and faction. This must have been one of the midnight signatures of the President, when he had not time to consider, or even to read the law; and the more fatal as being irrepealable but with the consent of the Senate, which will never be obtained.

F. Gilmer has communicated to me Mr. Correa's letter to him of adieux to his friends here, among whom he names most affectionately Mrs. Madison and yourself. No foreigner, I believe, has ever carried with him more friendly regrets. He was to sail the next day (November 10) in the British packet for England, and thence take his passage in January for Brazil. His present views are of course liable to be affected by the events of Portugal, and the possible effects of their example on Brazil. I expect to return to Monticello about the middle of the ensuing month, and salute you with constant affection and respect.

TO THOMAS RITCHIE.

MONTICELLO, December 25, 1820.

DEAR SIR,—On my return home after a long absence, I find here your favor of November the 23d, with Colonel Taylor's "Construction Construed,"

which you have been so kind as to send me, in the name of the author as well as yourself. Permit me, if you please, to use the same channel for conveying to him the thanks I render you also for this mark of attention. I shall read it, I know, with edification, as I did his Inquiry, to which I acknowledge myself indebted for many valuable ideas, and for the correction of some errors of early opinion, never seen in a correct light until presented to me in that work. That the present volume is equally orthodox, I know before reading it, because I know that Colonel Taylor and myself have rarely, if ever, differed in any political principle of importance. Every act of his life, and every word he ever wrote, satisfies me of this. So, also, as to the two Presidents, late and now in office, I know them both to be of principles as truly republican as any men living. If there be anything amiss, therefore, in the present state of our affairs, as the formidable deficit lately unfolded to us indicates, I ascribe it to the inattention of Congress to their duties, to their unwise dissipation and waste of the public contributions. They seemed, some little while ago, to be at a loss for objects whereon to throw away the supposed fathomless funds of the treasury. I had feared the result, because I saw among them some of my old fellow laborers, of tried and known principles, yet often in their minorities. I am aware that in one of their most ruinous vagaries, the people were themselves betrayed into the same frenzy with their Representatives. The deficit pro-

duced, and a heavy tax to supply it, will, I trust, bring both to their sober senses.

But it is not from this branch of government we have most to fear. Taxes and short elections will keep them right. The judiciary of the United States is the subtle corps of sappers and miners constantly working under ground to undermine the foundations of our confederated fabric. They are construing our Constitution from a co-ordination of a general and special government to a general and supreme one alone. This will lay all things at their feet, and they are too well versed in English law to forget the maxim, "*boni judicis est ampliare jurisdictionem.*" We shall see if they are bold enough to take the daring stride their five lawyers have lately taken. If they do, then, with the editor of our book, in his address to the public, I will say, that "against this every man should raise his voice," and more, should uplift his arm. Who wrote this admirable address? Sound, luminous, strong, not a word too much, nor one which can be changed but for the worse. That pen should go on, lay bare these wounds of our Constitution, expose the decisions *seriatim*, and arouse, as it is able, the attention of the nation to these bold speculators on its patience. Having found, from experience, that impeachment is an impracticable thing, a mere scare-crow, they consider themselves secure for life; they skulk from responsibility to public opinion, the only remaining hold on them, under a practice first introduced into England by

Lord Mansfield. An opinion is huddled up in conclave, perhaps by a majority of one, delivered as if unanimous, and with the silent acquiescence of lazy or timid associates, by a crafty chief judge, who sophisticates the law to his mind, by the turn of his own reasoning. A judiciary law was once reported by the Attorney General to Congress, requiring each judge to deliver his opinion *seriatim* and openly, and then to give it in writing to the clerk to be entered in the record. A judiciary independent of a king or executive alone, is a good thing; but independence of the will of the nation is a solecism, at least in a republican government.

But to return to your letter; you ask for my opinion of the work you send me, and to let it go out to the public. This I have ever made a point of declining, (one or two instances only excepted). Complimentary thanks to writers who have sent me their works, have betrayed me sometimes before the public, without my consent having been asked. But I am far from presuming to direct the reading of my fellow citizens, who are good enough judges themselves of what is worthy their reading. I am, also, too desirous of quiet to place myself in the way of contention. Against this I am admonished by bodily decay, which cannot be unaccompanied by corresponding wane of the mind. Of this I am as yet sensible, sufficiently to be unwilling to trust myself before the public, and when I cease to be so, I hope that my friends will be too careful of me to

draw me forth and present me, like a Priam in armor, as a spectacle for public compassion. I hope our political bark will ride through all its dangers; but I can in future be but an inert passenger.

I salute you with sentiments of great friendship and respect.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE.

MONTICELLO, December 26, 1820.

It is long, indeed, my very dear friend, since I have been able to address a letter to you. For more than two years my health has been so entirely prostrate, that I have, of necessity, intermitted all correspondence. The dislocated wrist, too, which perhaps you may recollect, has now become so stiff from the effects of age, that writing is become a slow and painful operation, and scarcely ever undertaken but under the goad of imperious business. In the meantime your country has been going on less well than I had hoped. But it will go on. The light which has been shed on the mind of man through the civilized world, has given it a new direction, from which no human power can divert it. The sovereigns of Europe who are wise, or have wise counsellors, see this, and bend to the breeze which blows; the unwise alone stiffen and meet its inevitable crush. The volcanic rumblings in the bowels of Europe, from north to south, seem to threaten a general explosion, and the march of armies into Italy cannot end in a

simple march. The disease of liberty is catching; those armies will take it in the south, carry it thence to their own country, spread there the infection of revolution and representative government, and raise its people from the prone condition of brutes to the erect attitude of man. Some fear our envelopment in the wars engendering from the unsettled state of our affairs with Spain, and therefore are anxious for a ratification of our treaty with her. I fear no such thing, and hope that if ratified by Spain it will be rejected here. We may justly say to Spain, "When this negotiation commenced, twenty years ago, your authority was acknowledged by those you are selling to us. That authority is now renounced, and their right of self-disposal asserted. In buying them from you, then, we buy but a war-title, a right to subdue them, which you can neither convey nor we acquire. This is a family quarrel in which we have no right to meddle. Settle it between yourselves, and we will then treat with the party whose right is acknowledged." With whom that will be, no doubt can be entertained. And why should we revolt them by purchasing them as cattle, rather than receiving them as fellow-men? Spain has held off until she sees they are lost to her, and now thinks it better to get something than nothing for them. When she shall see South America equally desperate, she will be wise to sell that also.

With us things are going on well. The boisterous sea of liberty indeed is never without a wave, and

that from Missouri is now rolling towards us, but we shall ride over it as we have over all others. It is not a moral question, but one merely of power. Its object is to raise a geographical principle for the choice of a President, and the noise will be kept up till that is effected. All know that permitting the slaves of the South to spread into the West will not add one being to that unfortunate condition, that it will increase the happiness of those existing, and by spreading them over a larger surface, will dilute the evil everywhere, and facilitate the means of getting finally rid of it, an event more anxiously wished by those on whom it presses than by the noisy pretenders to exclusive humanity. In the meantime, it is a ladder for rivals climbing to power.

In a letter to Mr. Porrey, of March 18th, 1819, I informed him of the success of our application to Congress on his behalf. I enclosed this letter to you, but hearing nothing from him, and as you say nothing of it in yours of July 20th, I am not without fear it may have miscarried. In the present I enclose for him the Auditor's certificate, and the letters of General Washington and myself, which he had forwarded to me with a request of their return. Your kindness in delivering this will render unnecessary another letter from me, an effort which necessarily obliges me to spare myself.

If you shall hear from me more seldom than heretofore, ascribe it, my ever dear friend, to the heavy load of seventy-seven years and to waning health,

but not to weakened affections; these will continue what they have ever been, and will ever be sincere and warm to the latest breath of yours devotedly.

TO WILLIAM ROSCOE.

MONTICELLO, December 27, 1820.

DEAR SIR,—Your letter received more than a twelvemonth ago, with the two tracts on penal jurisprudence, and the literary institution of Liverpool, ought long since to have called for the thanks I now return, had it been in my power sooner to have tendered them. But a long continuance of ill health has suspended all power of answering the kind attentions with which I have been honored during it; and it is only now that a state of slow and uncertain convalescence enables me to make acknowledgments which have been so long and painfully delayed. The treatise on penal jurisprudence I read with great pleasure. Beccaria had demonstrated general principles, but practical applications were difficult. Our States are trying them with more or less success; and the great light you have thrown on the subject will, I am sure, be useful to our experiment. For the thing, as yet, is but in experiment. Your Liverpool institution will also aid us in the organization of our new University, an establishment now in progress in this State, and to which my remaining days and faculties will be devoted. When ready for its professors, we shall apply for them chiefly to your island.

Were we content to remain stationary in science, we should take them from among ourselves; but, desirous of advancing, we must seek them in countries already in advance; and identity of language points to our best resource. To furnish inducements, we provide for the professors separate buildings, in which themselves and their families may be handsomely and comfortably lodged, and to liberal salaries will be added lucrative perquisites. This institution will be based on the illimitable freedom of the human mind. For here we are not afraid to follow truth wherever it may lead, nor to tolerate any error so long as reason is left free to combat it.

We are looking with wonder at what is passing among you. It

> "Resembles ocean into tempest wrought,
> To waft a feather, or to drown a fly."

There must be something in these agitations more than meets the eye of a distant spectator. Your queen must be used in this as a rallying point merely, around which are gathering the discontents of every quarter and character. If these flowed from theories of government only, and if merely from the heads of speculative men, they would admit of parley, of negotiation, of management. But I fear they are the workings of hungry bellies, which nothing but food will fill and quiet. I sincerely wish you safely out of them. Circumstances have nourished between our kindred countries angry dispositions which both ought long since to have banished from their bosoms.

I have ever considered a cordial affection as the first interest of both. No nation on earth can hurt us so much as yours, none be more useful to you than ours. The obstacle, we have believed, was in the obstinate and unforgiving temper of your late king, and a continuance of his prejudices kept up from habit, after he was withdrawn from power. I hope I now see symptoms of sounder views in your government; in which I know it will be cordially met by ours, as it would have been by every administration which has existed under our present Constitution. None desired it more cordially than myself, whatever different opinions were impressed on your government by a party who wishes to have its weight in their scale as its exclusive friends.

My ancient friend and classmate, James Maury, informs me by letter that he has sent me a bust which I shall receive with great pleasure and thankfulness, and shall arrange in honorable file with those of some cherished characters. Will you permit me to place here my affectionate souvenirs of him, and accept for yourself the assurance of the highest consideration and esteem.

TO FRANCIS EPPES.

MONTICELLO, January 19, 1821.

DEAR FRANCIS,—Your letter of the 1st came safely to hand. I am sorry you have lost Mr. Elliot; however, the kindness of Dr. Cooper will be able to

keep you in the track of what is worthy of your time.

You ask my opinion of Lord Bolingbroke and Thomas Paine. They were alike in making bitter enemies of the priests and pharisees of their day. Both were honest men; both advocates for human liberty. Paine wrote for a country which permitted him to push his reasoning to whatever length it would go; Lord Bolingbroke in one restrained by a constitution, and by public opinion. He was called indeed a tory; but his writings prove him a stronger advocate for liberty than any of his countrymen, the whigs of the present day. Irritated by his exile, he committed one act unworthy of him, in connecting himself momentarily with a prince rejected by his country. But he redeemed that single act by his establishment of the principles which proved it to be wrong. These two persons differed remarkably in the style of their writing, each leaving a model of what is most perfect in both extremes of the simple and the sublime. No writer has exceeded Paine in ease and familiarity of style, in perspicuity of expression, happiness of elucidation, and in simple and unassuming language. In this he may be compared with Dr. Franklin; and indeed his Common Sense was, for awhile, believed to have been written by Dr. Franklin, and published under the borrowed name of Paine, who had come over with him from England. Lord Bolingbroke's, on the other hand, is a style of the highest order. The lofty, rhythmical,

full-flowing eloquence of Cicero. Periods of just measure, their members proportioned, their close full and round. His conceptions, too, are bold and strong, his diction copious, polished and commanding as his subject. His writings are certainly the finest samples in the English language, of the eloquence proper for the Senate. His political tracts are safe reading for the most timid religionist, his philosophical, for those who are not afraid to trust their reason with discussions of right and wrong.

You have asked my opinion of these persons, and, *to you*, I have given it freely. But, remember, that I am old, that I wish not to make new enemies, nor to give offence to those who would consider a difference of opinion as sufficient ground for unfriendly dispositions. God bless you, and make you what I wish you to be.

TO ARCHIBALD THWEAT.

MONTICELLO, January 19, 1821.

DEAR SIR,—I duly received your favor of the 11th, covering Judge Roane's letter, which I now return. Of the kindness of his sentiments expressed towards myself I am highly sensible; and could I believe that my public services had merited the approbation he so indulgently bestows, the satisfaction I should derive from it would be reward enough to his wish that I would take a part in the transactions of the present day. I am sensible of my incompetence. For first, I know little about them, having long with-

drawn my attention from public affairs, and resigned myself with folded arms to the care of those who are to care for us all. And, next, the hand of time pressing heavily on me, in mind as well as body, leaves to neither sufficient energy to engage in public contentions. I am sensible of the inroads daily making by the federal, into the jurisdiction of its co-ordinate associates, the State governments. The legislative and executive branches may sometimes err, but elections and dependence will bring them to rights. The judiciary branch is the instrument which, working like gravity, without intermission, is to press us at last into one consolidated mass. Against this I know no one who, equally with Judge Roane himself, possesses the power and the courage to make resistance; and to him I look, and have long looked, as our strongest bulwark. If Congress fails to shield the States from dangers so palpable and so imminent, the States must shield themselves, and meet the invader foot to foot. This is already half done by Colonel Taylor's book; because a conviction that we are right accomplishes half the difficulty of correcting wrong. This book is the most effectual retraction of our government to its original principles which has ever yet been sent by heaven to our aid. Every State in the Union should give a copy to every member they elect, as a standing instruction, and ours should set the example. Accept with Mrs. Thweat the assurance of my affectionate and respectful attachment.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

MONTICELLO, January 22, 1821.

I was quite rejoiced, dear Sir, to see that you had health and spirits enough to take part in the late convention of your State, for revising its Constitution, and to bear your share in its debates and labors. The amendments of which we have as yet heard, prove the advance of liberalism in the intervening period; and encourage a hope that the human mind will some day get back to the freedom it enjoyed two thousand years ago. This country, which has given to the world the example of physical liberty, owes to it that of moral emancipation also, for as yet it is but nominal with us. The inquisition of public opinion overwhelms in practice, the freedom asserted by the laws in theory.

Our anxieties in this quarter are all concentrated in the question, what does the Holy Alliance in and out of Congress mean to do with us on the Missouri question? And this, by-the-bye, is but the name of the case, it is only the John Doe or Richard Roe of the ejectment. The real question, as seen in the States afflicted with this unfortunate population, is, are our slaves to be presented with freedom and a dagger? For if Congress has the power to regulate the conditions of the inhabitants of the States, within the States, it will be but another exercise of that power, to declare that all shall be free. Are we then to see again Athenian and Lacedemonian con-

federacies? To wage another Peloponnesian war to settle the ascendency between them? Or is this the tocsin of merely a servile war? That remains to be seen; but not, I hope, by you or me. Surely, they will parley awhile, and give us time to get out of the way. What a Bedlamite is man! But let us turn from our own uneasiness to the miseries of our southern friends. Bolivar and Morillo, it seems, have come to the parley, with dispositions at length to stop the useless effusion of human blood in that quarter. I feared from the beginning, that these people were not yet sufficiently enlightened for self-government; and that after wading through blood and slaughter, they would end in military tyrannies, more or less numerous. Yet as they wished to try the experiment, I wished them success in it; they have now tried it, and will possibly find that their safest road will be an accommodation with the Mother country, which shall hold them together by the single link of the same chief magistrate, leaving to him power enough to keep them in peace with one another, and to themselves the essential power of self-government and self-improvement, until they shall be sufficiently trained by education and habits of freedom to walk safely by themselves. Representative government, native functionaries, a qualified negative on their laws, with a previous security by compact for freedom of commerce, freedom of the press, *habeas corpus* and trial by jury, would make a good beginning. This last would be the school in

which their people might begin to learn the exercise of civic duties as well as rights. For freedom of religion they are not yet prepared. The scales of bigotry have not sufficiently fallen from their eyes, to accept it for themselves individually, much less to trust others with it. But that will come in time, as well as a general ripeness to break entirely from the parent stem. You see, my dear Sir, how easily we prescribe for others a cure for their difficulties, while we cannot cure our own. We must leave both, I believe, to heaven, and wrap ourselves up in the mantle of resignation, and of that friendship of which I tender to you the most sincere assurances.

TO JOSEPH C. CABELL.

MONTICELLO, January 31, 1821.

DEAR SIR,—Your favors of the 18th and 25th came together, three days ago. They fill me with gloom as to the dispositions of our legislature towards the University. I perceive that I am not to live to see it opened. As to what had better be done within the limits of their will, I trust with entire confidence to what yourself, Gen. Breckenridge and Mr. Johnson shall think best. You will see what is practicable, and give it such shape as you think best. If a loan is to be resorted to, I think sixty thousand dollars will be necessary, including the library. Its instalments cannot begin until those of the former loan are accomplished; and they should not begin

later, nor be less than thirteen thousand dollars a year. (I think it safe to retain two thousand dollars a year for care of the buildings, improvement of the grounds, and unavoidable contingencies.) To extinguish this second loan, will require between five and six instalments, which will carry us to the end of 1833, or thirteen years from this time. My individual opinion is, that we had better not open the institution until the buildings, library, and all, are finished, and our funds cleared of incumbrance. These buildings once erected, will secure the full object infallibly at the end of thirteen years, and as much earlier as the legislature shall choose. And if we were to begin sooner, with half funds only, it would satisfy the common mind, prevent their aid beyond that point, and our institution remaining at that forever, would be no more than the paltry academies we now have. Even with the whole funds we shall be reduced to six professors. While Harvard will still prime it over us with her twenty professors. How many of our youths she now has, learning the lessons of anti-Missourianism, I know not; but a gentleman lately from Princeton, told me he saw there the list of the students at that place, and that more than half were Virginians. These will return home, no doubt, deeply impressed with the sacred principles of our Holy Alliance of restrictionists.

But the gloomiest of all prospects, is in the desertion of the best friends of the institution, for desertion I must call it. I know not the necessities which may

force this on you. General Cocke, you say, will explain them to me; but I cannot conceive them, nor persuade myself they are uncontrollable. I have ever hoped, that yourself, Gen. Breckenridge and Mr. Johnson would stand at your posts in the legislature, until everything was effected, and the institution opened. If it is so difficult to get along with all the energy and influence of our present colleagues in the legislature, how can we expect to proceed at all, reducing our moving power? I know well your devotion to your country, and your foresight of the awful scenes coming on her, sooner or later. With this foresight, what service can we ever render her equal to this? What object of our lives can we propose so important? What interest of our own which ought not to be postponed to this? Health, time, labor, on what in the single life which nature has given us, can these be better bestowed than on this immortal boon to our country? The exertions and the mortifications are temporary; the benefit eternal. If any member of our college of visitors could justifiably withdraw from this sacred duty, it would be myself, who, *quadragenis stipendiis jamdudum peractis*, have neither vigor of body nor mind left to keep the field; but I will die in the last ditch, and so I hope you will, my friend, as well as our firm-breasted brothers and colleagues, Mr. Johnson and Gen. Breckenridge. Nature will not give you a second life wherein to atone for the omissions of this. Pray then, dear and very dear Sir, do not think of

deserting us, but view the sacrifices which seem to stand in your way, as the lesser duties, and such as ought to be postponed to this, the greatest of all. Continue with us in these holy labors, until having seen their accomplishment, we may say with old Simeon, "*nunc dimittis, Domine.*" Under all circumstances, however, of praise or blame, I shall be affectionately yours.

TO JARED MANSFIELD, ESQ.

MONTICELLO, February 13, 1821.

I am favored, Sir, with your letter of January 26th, and am duly sensible of the honor proposed of giving to my portrait a place among the benefactors of our nation, and of the establishment of West Point in particular. I have ever considered that establishment as of major importance to our country, and in whatever I could do for it, I viewed myself as performing a duty only. This is certainly more than requited by the kind sentiments expressed in your letter. The real debt of the institution is to its able and zealous professors. Mr. Sully, I fear, however, will consider the trouble of his journey, and the employment of his fine pencil, as illy bestowed on an ottamy of 78. Voltaire, when requested by a female friend to sit for his bust by the sculptor Pigalle, answered, "J'ai soixante seize ans; et M. Pigalle doit, dit-on venir modeler mon visage. Mais, Madame, il faudrait que j'eusse un visage. On n'en

devinerait à peine la place mes yeux sont enfonces de trois pouces; mes joues sont de vieux parchemin mal collés sur des os qui ne tiennent à rien. Le peu de dents que j'avais est parti." I will conclude, however, with him, that what remains is at your service, and that of the pencil of Mr. Sully. I shall be at home till the middle of April, when I shall go for some time to an occasional and distant residence. Within this term Mr. Sully will be pleased to consult his own convenience, in which the state of the roads will of course have great weight. Every day of it will be equal with me.

I pray you, Sir, to convey to the brethren of your institution, and to accept for yourself also, the assurance of my high consideration and regard.

TO GENERAL JAMES BRECKINRIDGE.

MONTICELLO, February 15, 1821.

DEAR SIR,—I learn, with deep affliction, that nothing is likely to be done for our University this year. So near as it is to the shore that one shove more would land it there, I had hoped that would be given; and that we should open with the next year an institution on which the fortunes of our country may depend more than may meet the general eye. The reflections that the boys of this age are to be the men of the next; that they should be prepared to receive the holy charge which we are cherishing to deliver over to them; that in establishing an in-

stitution of wisdom for them, we secure it to all our future generations; that in fulfilling this duty, we bring home to our own bosoms the sweet consolation of seeing our sons rising under a luminous tuition, to destinies of high promise; these are considerations which will occur to all; but all, I fear, do not see the speck in our horizon which is to burst on us as a tornado, sooner or later. The line of division lately marked out between different portions of our confederacy, is such as will never, I fear, be obliterated, and we are now trusting to those who are against us in position and principle, to fashion to their own form the minds and affections of our youth. If, as has been estimated, we send three hundred thousand dollars a year to the Northern seminaries, for the instruction of our own sons, then we must have there five hundred of our sons, imbibing opinions and principles in discord with those of their own country. This canker is eating on the vitals of our existence, and if not arrested at once, will be beyond remedy. We are now certainly furnishing recruits to their school. If it be asked what are we to do, or said we cannot give the last lift to the University without stopping our primary schools, and these we think most important; I answer, I know their importance. Nobody can doubt my zeal for the general instruction of the people. Who first started that idea? I may surely say, myself. Turn to the bill in the revised code, which I drew more than forty years ago, and before which the idea of a plan for the education

of the people, generally, had never been suggested in this State. There you will see developed the first rudiments of the whole system of general education we are now urging and acting on; and it is well known to those with whom I have acted on this subject, that I never have proposed a sacrifice of the primary to the ultimate grade of instruction. Let us keep our eye steadily on the whole system. If we cannot do everything at once, let us do one at a time. The primary schools need no preliminary expense; the ultimate grade requires a considerable expenditure in advance. A suspension of proceeding for a year or two on the primary schools, and an application of the whole income, during that time, to the completion of the buildings necessary for the University, would enable us then to start both institutions at the same time. The intermediate branch, of colleges, academies and private classical schools, for the middle grade, may hereafter receive any necessary aids when the funds shall become competent. In the meantime, they are going on sufficiently, as they have ever yet gone on, at the private expense of those who use them, and who in numbers and means are competent to their own exigencies. The experience of three years has, I presume, left no doubt that the present plan of primary schools, of putting money into the hands of twelve hundred persons acting for nothing, and under no responsibility, is entirely inefficient. Some other must be thought of; and during this pause, if it be only for a year, the whole

revenue of that year, with that of the last three years which has not been already thrown away, would place our University in readiness to start with a better organization of primary schools, and both may then go on, hand in hand, forever. No diminution of the capital will in this way have been incurred; a principle which ought to be deemed sacred. A relinquishment of interest on the late loan of sixty thousand dollars, would so far, also, forward the University without lessening the capital.

But what may be best done I leave with entire confidence to yourself and your colleagues in legislation, who know better than I do the conditions of the literary fund and its wisest application; and I shall acquiesce with perfect resignation to their will. I have brooded, perhaps with fondness, over this establishment, as it held up to me the hope of continuing to be useful while I continued to live. I had believed that the course and circumstances of my life had placed within my power some services favorable to the outset of the institution. But this may be egotism; pardonable, perhaps, when I express a consciousness that my colleagues and successors will do as well, whatever the legislature shall enable them to do.

I have thus, my dear Sir, opened my bosom, with all its anxieties, freely to you. I blame nobody for seeing things in a different light. I am sure that all act conscientiously, and that all will be done honestly and wisely which can be done. I yield the concerns

of the world with cheerfulness to those who are appointed in the order of nature to succeed to them; and for yourself, for our colleagues, and for all in charge of our country's future fame and fortune, I offer up sincere prayers.

TO DABNEY TERRELL, ESQ.

MONTICELLO, February 26, 1821.

DEAR SIR,—While you were in this neighborhood, you mentioned to me your intention of studying the law, and asked my opinion as to the sufficient course of reading. I gave it to you, *ore tenus*, and with so little consideration that I do not remember what it was; but I have since recollected that I once wrote a letter to Dr. Cooper,[1] on good consideration of the subject. He was then Law Lecturer, I believe, at Carlisle. My stiffening wrist makes writing now a slow and painful operation, but my granddaughter Ellen undertakes to copy the letter, which I shall enclose herein.

I notice in that letter four distinct epochs at which the English laws have been reviewed, and their whole body, as existing at each epoch, well digested into a code. These digests were by Bracton, Coke, Matthew Bacon and Blackstone. Bracton having written about the commencement of the extant statutes, may be considered as having given a digest of the laws then in being, written and unwritten,

[1] January 16, 1814.

and forming, therefore, the textual code of what is called the common law, just at the period, too, when it begins to be altered by statutes to which we can appeal. But so much of his matter is become obsolete by change of circumstances or altered by statute, that the student may omit him for the present, and

1st. Begin with Coke's four Institutes.[1] These give a complete body of the law as it stood in the reign of the first James, an epoch the more interesting to us, as we separated at that point from English legislation, and acknowledge no subsequent statutory alterations.

2. Then passing over (for occasional reading as hereafter proposed) all the reports and treatises to the time of Matthew Bacon, read his abridgment, compiled about one hundred years after Coke's, in which they are all embodied. This gives numerous applications of the old principles to new cases, and

[1] Since the date of this letter, a most important and valuable edition has been published of Coke's First Institute. The editor, Thomas, has analyzed the whole work, and re-composed its matter in the order of Blackstone's Commentaries, not omitting a sentence of Lord Coke's text, nor inserting one not his. In notes, under the text, he has given the modern decisions relating to the same subjects, rendering it thus as methodical, lucid, easy and agreeable to the reader as Blackstone, and more precise and profound. It can now be no longer doubted that this is the very best elementary work for a beginner in the study of the law. It is not, I suppose, to be had in this State, and questionable if in the North, as yet, and it is dear, costing in England four guineas or nineteen dollars, to which add the duty here on imported books, which, on the three volumes 8vo, is something more than three dollars, or one dollar the 8vo volume. This is a tax on learned readers to support printers for the readers of "The Delicate Distress," and "The Wild Irish Boy."

gives the general state of the English law at that period.

Here, too, the student should take up the chancery branch of the law, by reading the first and second abridgments of the cases in Equity. The second is by the same Matthew Bacon, the first having been published some time before. The alphabetical order adopted by Bacon, is certainly not as satisfactory as the systematic. But the arrangement is under very general and leading heads, and these, indeed, with very little difficulty, might be systematically instead of alphabetically arranged and read.

3. Passing now in like manner over all intervening reports and tracts, the student may take up Blackstone's Commentaries, published about twenty-five years later than Bacon's abridgment, and giving the substance of these new reports and tracts. This review is not so full as that of Bacon, by any means, but better digested. Here, too, Woodeson should be read as supplementary to Blackstone, under heads too shortly treated by him. Fonblanque's edition of Francis' Maxims of Equity, and Bridgman's digested Index, into which the latter cases are incorporated, are also supplementary in the chancery branch, in which Blackstone is very short.

This course comprehends about twenty-six 8vo volumes, and reading four or five hours a day would employ about two years.

After these, the best of the reporters since Blackstone should be read for the new cases which have

occurred since his time. Which they are I know not, as all of them are since my time.

By way of change and relief for another hour or two in the day, should be read the law tracts of merit which are many, and among them all those of Baron Gilbert are of the first order. In these hours, too, may be read Bracton, (now translated,) and Justinian's Institute. The method of these two last works is very much the same, and their language often quite so. Justinian is very illustrative of the doctrines of equity, and is often appealed to, and Cooper's edition is the best on account of the analogies and contrasts he has given of the Roman and English law. After Bracton, Reeves' History of the English Law may be read to advantage. During this same hour or two of lighter law reading, select and leading cases of the reporters may be successively read, which the several digests will have pointed out and referred to.

* * * * * * * * * * *

I have here sketched the reading in common law and chancery which I suppose necessary for a reputable practitioner in those courts. But there are other branches of law in which, although it is not expected he should be an adept, yet when it occurs to speak of them, it should be understandingly to a decent degree. There are the Admiralty law, Ecclesiastical law, and the Law of Nations. I would name as elementary books in these branches, Molloy de Jure Maritimo; Brown's Compend of the Civil and

Admiralty Law, 2 vols., 8vo; the Jura Ecclesiastica, 2 vols., 8vo, and Les Institutions du droit de la Nature et des Gens de Reyneval, 1 vol., 8vo.

Besides these six hours of law reading, light and heavy, and those necessary for the repasts of the day, for exercise and sleep, which suppose to be ten or twelve, there will still be six or eight hours for reading, history, politics, ethics, physics, oratory, poetry, criticism, etc., as necessary as law to form an accomplished lawyer.

The letter to Dr. Cooper, with this as a supplement, will give you those ideas on a sufficient course of law reading which I ought to have done with more consideration at the moment of your first request. Accept them now as a testimony of my esteem, and of sincere wishes for your success; and the family, *una voce*, desires me to convey theirs with my own affectionate salutations.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, ESQ.

MONTICELLO, February 27, 1821.

I have received, Sir, your favor of the 12th, and I assure you I received it with pleasure. It is true, as you say, that we have differed in political opinions; but I can say with equal truth, that I never suffered a political to become a personal difference. I have been left on this ground by some friends whom I dearly loved, but I was never the first to separate. With some others, of politics different from mine, I

have continued in the warmest friendship to this day, and to all, and to yourself particularly, I have ever done moral justice.

I thank you for Mr. Channing's discourse, which you have been so kind as to forward me. It is not yet at hand, but is doubtless on its way. I had received it through another channel, and read it with high satisfaction. No one sees with greater pleasure than myself the progress of reason in its advances towards rational Christianity. When we shall have done away the incomprehensible jargon of the Trinitarian arithmetic, that three are one, and one is three; when we shall have knocked down the artificial scaffolding, reared to mask from view the simple structure of Jesus; when, in short, we shall have unlearned everything which has been taught since His day, and got back to the pure and simple doctrines He inculcated, we shall then be truly and worthily His disciples; and my opinion is that if nothing had ever been added to what flowed purely from His lips, the whole world would at this day have been Christian. I know that the case you cite, of Dr. Drake, has been a common one. The religion-builders have so distorted and deformed the doctrines of Jesus, so muffled them in mysticisms, fancies and falsehoods, have caricatured them into forms so monstrous and inconceivable, as to shock reasonable thinkers, to revolt them against the whole, and drive them rashly to pronounce its Founder an impostor. Had there never been a com-

mentator, there never would have been an infidel. In the present advance of truth, which we both approve, I do not know that you and I may think alike on all points. As the Creator has made no two faces alike, so no two minds, and probably no two creeds. We well know that among Unitarians themselves there are strong shades of difference, as between Doctors Price and Priestley, for example. So there may be peculiarities in your creed and in mine. They are honestly formed without doubt. I do not wish to trouble the world with mine, nor to be troubled for them. These accounts are to be settled only with Him who made us; and to Him we leave it, with charity for all others, of whom, also, He is the only rightful and competent Judge. I have little doubt that the whole of our country will soon be rallied to the unity of the Creator, and, I hope, to the pure doctrines of Jesus also.

In saying to you so much, and without reserve, on a subject on which I never permit myself to go before the public, I know that I am safe against the infidelities which have so often betrayed my letters to the strictures of those for whom they were not written, and to whom I never meant to commit my peace. To yourself I wish every happiness, and will conclude, as you have done, in the same simple style of antiquity, *da operam ut valeas; hoc mihi gratius facere nihil potes.*

TO JUDGE SPENCER ROANE.

MONTICELLO, March 9, 1821.

DEAR SIR,—I am indebted for your favor of February 25th, and especially for your friendly indulgence to my excuses for retiring from the polemical world. I should not shrink from the post of duty, had not the decays of nature withdrawn me from the list of combatants. Great decline in the energies of the body import naturally a corresponding wane of the mind, and a longing after tranquillity as the last and sweetest asylum of age. It is a law of nature that the generations of men should give way, one to another, and I hope that the one now on the stage will preserve for their sons the political blessings delivered into their hands by their fathers. Time indeed changes manners and notions, and so far we must expect institutions to bend to them. But time produces also corruption of principles, and against this it is the duty of good citizens to be ever on the watch, and if the gangrene is to prevail at last, let the day be kept off as long as possible. We see already germs of this, as might be expected. But we are not the less bound to press against them. The multiplication of public offices, increase of expense beyond income, growth and entailment of a public debt, are indications soliciting the employment of the pruning-knife; and I doubt not it will be employed; good principles being as yet prevalent enough for that.

The great object of my fear is the federal judiciary. That body, like gravity, ever acting, with noiseless foot, and unalarming advance, gaining ground step by step, and holding what it gains, is ingulfing insidiously the special governments into the jaws of that which feeds them. The recent recall to first principles, however, by Colonel Taylor, by yourself, and now by Alexander Smith, will, I hope, be heard and obeyed, and that a temporary check will be effected. Yet be not weary of well doing. Let the eye of vigilance never be closed.

Last and most portentous of all is the Missouri question. It is smeared over for the present; but its geographical demarcation is indelible. What it is to become, I see not; and leave to those who will live to see it. The University will give employment to my remaining years, and quite enough for my senile faculties. It is the last act of usefulness I can render, and could I see it open I would not ask an hour more of life. To you I hope many will still be given; and, certain they will all be employed for the good of our beloved country, I salute you with sentiments of especial friendship and respect.

TO JUDGE SPENCER ROANE.

MONTICELLO, June 27, 1821.

DEAR SIR,—I have received through the hands of the Governor, Colonel Taylor's letter to you. It is with extreme reluctance that I permit myself to

usurp the office of an adviser of the public, what books they should read, and what not. I yield, however, on this occasion to your wish and that of Colonel Taylor, and do what (with a single exception only) I never did before, on the many similar applications made to me. On reviewing my letters to Colonel Taylor and to Mr. Thweatt, neither appeared exactly proper. Each contained matter which might give offence to the judges, without adding strength to the opinion. I have, therefore, out of the two, cooked up what may be called "an extract of a letter from Th: J. to ——;" but without saying it is published *with my consent.* That would forever deprive me of the ground of declining the office of a Reviewer of books in future cases. I sincerely wish the attention of the public may be drawn to the doctrines of the book; and if this self-styled extract may contribute to it, I shall be gratified. I salute you with constant friendship and respect.

Extract of a Letter from Th: Jefferson to ——.

I have read Colonel Taylor's book of "Constructions Construed," with great satisfaction, and, I will say, with edification; for I acknowledge it corrected some errors of opinion into which I had slidden without sufficient examination. It is the most logical retraction of our governments to the original and true principles of the Constitution creating them, which has appeared since the adoption of that instrument. I may not perhaps concur in all its opinions,

great and small; for no two men ever thought alike on so many points. But on all its important questions, it contains the true political faith, to which every catholic republican should steadfastly hold. It should be put into the hands of all our functionaries, authoritatively, as a standing instruction, and true exposition of our Constitution, as understood at the time we agreed to it. It is a fatal heresy to suppose that either our State governments are superior to the federal, or the federal to the States. The people, to whom all authority belongs, have divided the powers of government into two distinct departments, the leading characters of which are *foreign* and domestic; and they have appointed for each a distinct set of functionaries. These they have made co-ordinate, checking and balancing each other, like the three cardinal departments in the individual States: each equally supreme as to the powers delegated to itself, and neither authorized ultimately to decide what belongs to itself, or to its coparcenor in government. As independent, in fact, as different nations, a spirit of forbearance and compromise, therefore, and not of encroachment and usurpation, is the healing balm of such a Constitution; and each party should prudently shrink from all approach to the line of demarcation, instead of rashly overleaping it, or throwing grapples ahead to haul to hereafter. But, finally, the peculiar happiness of our blessed system is, that in differences of opinion between these different sets of servants, the appeal is to neither,

but to their employers peaceably assembled by their representatives in convention. This is more rational than the *jus fortioris*, or the cannon's mouth, the *ultima et sola ratio regum*.

TO GENERAL HENRY DEARBORN.

MONTICELLO, August 17, 1821.

DEAR SIR,—Your favor of the 8th came to hand yesterday evening. I hope you will never suppose your letters to be among those which are troublesome to me. They are always welcome, and it is among my great comforts to hear from my ancient colleagues, and to know that they are well. The affectionate recollection of Mrs. Dearborn cherished by our family, will ever render her health and happiness interesting to them. You are so far astern of Mr. Adams and myself, that you must not yet talk of old age. I am happy to hear of his good health. I think he will outlive us all, I mean the Declaration-men, although our senior since the death of Colonel Floyd. It is a race in which I have no ambition to win. Man, like the fruit he eats, has his period of ripeness. Like that, too, if he continues longer hanging to the stem, it is but an useless and unsightly appendage. I rejoice with you that the State of Missouri is at length a member of our Union. Whether the question it excited is dead, or only sleepeth, I do not know. I see only that it has given resurrection to the Hartford Convention men. They

have had the address, by playing on the honest feelings of our former friends, to seduce them from their kindred spirits, and to borrow their weight into the federal scale. Desperate of regaining power under political distinctions, they have adroitly wriggled into its seat under the auspices of morality, and are again in the ascendency from which their sins had hurled them. It is indeed of little consequence who governs us, if they sincerely and zealously cherish the principles of union and republicanism.

I still believe that the Western extension of our confederacy will ensure its duration, by overruling local factions, which might shake a smaller association. But whatever may be the merit or demerit of that acquisition, I divide it with my colleagues, to whose counsels I was indebted for a course of administration which, notwithstanding this late coalition of clay and brass, will, I hope, continue to receive the approbation of our country.

The portrait by Stuart was received in due time and good order, and claims, for this difficult acquisition, the thanks of the family, who join me in affectionate souvenirs of Mrs. Dearborn and yourself. My particular salutations to both flow, as ever, from the heart, continual and warm.

TO CHARLES HAMMOND.

MONTICELLO, August 18, 1821.

SIR,—Your favor of the 7th is just now received. The letter to which it refers was written by me with

the sole view of recommending to the study of my fellow citizens a book which I considered as containing more genuine doctrines on the subject of our government, and carrying us back more truly to its fundamental principles, than any one which had been written since the adoption of our Constitution. As confined to this object, I thought, and still think, its language as plain and intelligible as I can make it. But when we see inspired writings made to speak whatever opposite controversialists wish them to say, we cannot ourselves expect to find language incapable of similar distortion. My expressions were general; their perversion is in their misapplication to a particular case. To test them truly, they should turn to the book with whose opinion they profess to coincide. If the book establishes that a State has no right to tax the moneyed property within its limits, or that it can be called, as a party, to the bar of the federal judiciary, then they may infer that these are my opinions. If no such doctrines are there, my letter does not authorize their imputation to me.

It has long, however, been my opinion, and I have never shrunk from its expression, (although I do not choose to put it into a newspaper, nor, like a Priam in armor, offer myself its champion,) that the germ of dissolution of our federal government is in the constitution of the federal judiciary; an irresponsible body, (for impeachment is scarcely a scare-crow,) working like gravity by night and by day, gaining a

little to-day and a little to-morrow, and advancing its noiseless step like a thief, over the field of jurisdiction, until all shall be usurped from the States, and the government of all be consolidated into one. To this I am opposed; because, when all government, domestic and foreign, in little as in great things, shall be drawn to Washington as the centre of all power, it will render powerless the checks provided of one government on another, and will become as venal and oppressive as the government from which we separated. It will be as in Europe, where every man must be either pike or gudgeon, hammer or anvil. Our functionaries and theirs are wares from the same work-shop; made of the same materials, and by the same hand. If the States look with apathy on this silent descent of their government into the gulf which is to swallow all, we have only to weep over the human character formed uncontrollable but by a rod of iron, and the blasphemers of man, as incapable of self-government, become his true historians.

But let me beseech you, Sir, not to let this letter get into a newspaper. Tranquillity, at my age, is the supreme good of life. I think it a duty, and it is my earnest wish, to take no further part in public affairs; to leave them to the existing generation to whose turn they have fallen, and to resign the remains of a decaying body and mind to their protection. The abuse of confidence by publishing my letters has cost me more than all other pains, and

makes me afraid to put pen to paper in a letter of sentiment. If I have done it frankly in answer to your letter, it is in full trust that I shall not be thrown by you into the arena of a newspaper. I salute you with great respect.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

MONTICELLO, September 12, 1821.

DEAR SIR,—I am just returned from my other home, and shall within a week go back to it for the rest of the autumn. I find here your favor of August 20th, and was before in arrear for that of May 19th. I cannot answer, but join in, your question of May 19th. Are we to surrender the pleasing hopes of seeing improvement in the moral and intellectual condition of man? The events of Naples and Piedmont cast a gloomy cloud over that hope, and Spain and Portugal are not beyond jeopardy. And what are we to think of this northern triumvirate, arming their nations to dictate despotisms to the rest of the world? And the evident connivance of England, as the price of secret stipulations for continental armies, if her own should take side with her malcontent and pulverized people? And what of the poor Greeks, and their small chance of amelioration even if the hypocritical Autocrat should take them under the iron cover of his Ukazes. Would this be lighter or safer than that of the Turk? These, my dear friend, are speculations for the new generation,

as, before they will be resolved, you and I must join our deceased brother Floyd. Yet I will not believe our labors are lost. I shall not die without a hope that light and liberty are on steady advance. We have seen, indeed, once within the records of history, a complete eclipse of the human mind continuing for centuries. And this, too, by swarms of the same northern barbarians, conquering and taking possession of the countries and governments of the civilized world. Should this be again attempted, should the same northern hordes, allured again by the corn, wine, and oil of the south, be able again to settle their swarms in the countries of their growth, the art of printing alone, and the vast dissemination of books, will maintain the mind where it is, and raise the conquering ruffians to the level of the conquered, instead of degrading these to that of their conquerors. And even should the cloud of barbarism and despotism again obscure the science and liberties of Europe, this country remains to preserve and restore light and liberty to them. In short, the flames kindled on the 4th of July, 1776, have spread over too much of the globe to be extinguished by the feeble engines of despotism; on the contrary, they will consume these engines and all who work them.

I think with you that there should be a school of instruction for our navy as well as artillery; and I do not see why the same establishment might not suffice for both. Both require the same basis of general mathematics, adding projectiles and forti-

fications for the artillery exclusively, and astronomy and theory of navigation exclusively for the naval students. Berout conducted both schools in France, and has left us the best book extant for their joint and separate instruction. It ought not to require a separate professor.

A 4th of July oration delivered in the town of Milford, in your State, gives to Samuel Chase the credit of having "first started the cry of independence in the ears of his countrymen." Do you remember anything of this? I do not. I have no doubt it was uttered in Massachusetts even before it was by Thomas Paine. But certainly I never considered Samuel Chase as foremost, or even forward in that hallowed cry. I know that Maryland hung heavily on our backs, and that Chase, although first named, was not most in unison with us of that delegation, either in politics or morals, *et c'est ainsi que l'on ecrit l'histoire!*

Your doubt of the legitimacy of the word *gloriola*, is resolved by Cicero, who, in his letter to Lucceius expresses a wish "*ut nos metipsi vivi gloriola nostra perfruamur.*" Affectionately adieu.

JOHN ADAMS TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

MONTEZILLO, September 24, 1821.

DEAR SIR,—I thank you for your favor of the 12th instant. Hope springs eternal. Eight millions of Jews hope for a Messiah more powerful and glorious

than Moses, David, or Solomon; who is to make them as powerful as he pleases. Some hundreds of millions of Mussulmans expect another prophet more powerful than Mahomet, who is to spread Islamism over the whole earth. Hundreds of millions of Christians expect and hope for a millennium in which Jesus is to reign for a thousand years over the whole world before it is burnt up. The Hindoos expect another and final incarnation of Vishnu, who is to do great and wonderful things, I know not what. All these hopes are founded on real or pretended revelation. The modern Greeks, too, it seems, hope for a deliverer who is to produce them—the Themistocleses and Demostheneses—the Platos and Aristotles—the Solons and Lycurguses. On what prophecies they found their belief, I know not. You and I hope for splendid improvements in human society, and vast amelioration in the condition of mankind. Our faith may be supposed by more rational arguments than any of the former. I own that I am very sanguine in the belief of them, as I hope and believe you are, and your reasoning in your letter confirmed me in them.

As Brother Floyd has gone, I am now the oldest of the little Congressional group that remain. I may therefore rationally hope to be the first to depart; and as you are the youngest and most energetic in mind and body, you may therefore rationally hope to be the last to take your flight, and to rake up the fire as father Sherman, who always staid to the

last, and commonly two days afterwards, used to say, "that it was his office to sit up and rake the ashes over the coals." And much satisfaction may you have in your office.

The cholera morbus has done wonders in St. Helena and in London. We shall soon hear of a negotiation for a second wife. Whether in the body, or out of the body, I shall always be your friend.

The anecdote of Mr. Chase, contained in the oration delivered at Milford, must be an idle rumor, for neither the State of Maryland, nor of their delegates, were very early in their conviction of the necessity of independence, nor very forward in promoting it. The old speaker Tilghman, Johnson, Chase, and Paca, were steady in promoting resistance, but after some of them, Maryland sent one, at least, of the most turbulent Tories that ever came to Congress.

TO ———.

MONTICELLO, September 28, 1821.

SIR,—The government of the United States, at a very early period, when establishing its tariff on foreign importations, were very much guided in their selection of objects by a desire to encourage manufactures within ourselves. Among other articles then selected were books, on the importation of which a duty of fifteen per cent. was imposed, which, by ordinary custom-house charges, amount to about eighteen per cent., and adding the importing book-

seller's profit on this, becomes about twenty-seven per cent. This was useful at first, perhaps, towards exciting our printers to make a beginning in that business here. But it is found in experience that the home demand is not sufficient to justify the re-printing any but the most popular English works, and cheap editions of a few of the classics for schools. For the editions of value, enriched by notes, commentaries, etc., and for books in foreign living languages, the demand here is too small and sparse to reimburse the expense of re-printing them. None of these, therefore, are printed here, and the duty on them becomes consequently not a protecting, but really a prohibitory one. It makes a very serious addition to the price of the book, and falls chiefly on a description of persons little able to meet it. Students who are destined for professional callings, as most of our scholars are, are barely able for the most part to meet the expenses of tuition. The addition of eighteen or twenty-seven per cent. on the books necessary for their instruction, amounts often to a prohibition as to them. For want of these aids, which are open to the students of all other nations but our own, they enter on their course on a very unequal footing with those of the same professions in foreign countries, and our citizens at large, too, who employ them, do not derive from that employment all the benefit which higher qualifications would give them. It is true that no duty is required on books imported for seminaries of learn-

ing, but these, locked up in libraries, can be of no avail to the practical man when he wishes a recurrence to them for the uses of life. Of many important books of reference there is not perhaps a single copy in the United States; of others but a few, and these too distant often to be accessible to scholars generally. It is believed, therefore, that if the attention of Congress could be drawn to this article, they would, in their wisdom, see its impolicy. Science is more important in a republican than in any other government. And in an infant country like ours, we must much depend for improvement on the science of other countries, longer established, possessing better means, and more advanced than we are. To prohibit us from the benefit of foreign light, is to consign us to long darkness.

The Northern seminaries following with parental solicitude the interests of their élèves in the course for which they have prepared them, propose to petition Congress on this subject, and wish for the coöperation of those of the South and West, and I have been requested, as more convenient in position than they are, to solicit that coöperation. Having no personal acquaintance with those who are charged with the direction of the college of ————, I do not know how more effectually to communicate these views to them, than by availing myself of the knowledge I have of your zeal for the happiness and improvement of our country. I take the liberty, therefore, of requesting you to place the subject

before the proper authorities of that institution, and if they approve the measure, to solicit a concurrent proceeding on their part to carry it into effect. Besides petitioning Congress, I would propose that they address in their corporate capacity, a letter to their delegates and Senators in Congress, soliciting their best endeavors to obtain the repeal of the duty on imported books. I cannot but suppose that such an application will be respected by them, and will engage their votes and endeavors to effect an object so reasonable. A conviction that science is important to the preservation of our republican government, and that it is also essential to its protection against foreign power, induces me, on this occasion, to step beyond the limits of that retirement to which age and inclination equally dispose me, and I am without a doubt that the same considerations will induce you to excuse the trouble I propose to you, and that you will kindly accept the assurance of my high respect and esteem.

TO NATHANIEL MACON.

MONTICELLO, November 23, 1821.

DEAR SIR,—Absence at an occasional but distant residence, prevented my receiving your friendly letter of October 20th till three days ago. A line from my good old friends is like balm to my soul. You ask me what you are to do with my letter of September 19th? I wrote it, my dear Sir, with no other view

than to pour my thoughts into your bosom. I knew they would be safe there, and I believed they would be welcome. But if you think, as you say, that "good may be done by showing it to a few *well-tried friends*," I have no objection to that, but ultimately you cannot do better than to throw it into the fire.

My confidence, as you kindly observed, has been often abused by the publication of my letters for the purposes of interest or vanity, and it has been to me the source of much pain to be exhibited before the public in forms not meant for them. I receive letters expressed in the most friendly and even affectionate terms, sometimes, perhaps asking my opinion on some subject. I cannot refuse to answer such letters, nor can I do it dryly and suspiciously. Among a score or two of such correspondents, one perhaps betrays me. I feel it mortifyingly, but conclude I had better incur one treachery than offend a score or two of good people. I sometimes expressly desire that my letter may not be published; but this is so like requesting a man not to steal or cheat, that I am ashamed of it after I have done it.

Our government is now taking so steady a course as to show by what road it will pass to destruction, to wit: by consolidation first, and then corruption, its necessary consequence. The engine of consolidation will be the federal judiciary; the two other branches, the corrupting and corrupted instruments. I fear an explosion in our State Legislature. I wish they may restrain themselves to a strong but tem-

perate protestation. Virginia is not at present in favor with her co-States. An opposition headed by her would determine all the anti-Missouri States to take the contrary side. She had better lie by, therefore, till the shoe shall pinch an Eastern State. Let the cry be first raised from that quarter, and we may fall into it with effect. But I fear our Eastern associates wish for consolidation, in which they would be joined by the smaller States generally. But, with one foot in the grave, I have no right to meddle with these things. Ever and affectionately yours.

TO ———.

MONTICELLO, November 29, 1821.

DEAR SIR,—You have often gratified me by your astronomical communications, and I am now about to amuse you with one of mine. But I must first explain the circumstances which have drawn me into a speculation so foreign to the path of life which the times in which I have lived, more than my own inclinations, have led me to pursue.

I had long deemed it incumbent on the authorities of our country, to have the great western wilderness beyond the Mississippi, explored, to make known its geography, its natural productions, its general character and inhabitants. Two attempts which I had myself made formerly, before the country was ours, the one from west to east, the other from east to west,

had both proved abortive. When called to the administration of the General Government, I made this an object of early attention, and proposed it to Congress. They voted a sum of five thousand dollars for its execution, and I placed Captain Lewis at the head of the enterprise. No man within the range of my acquaintance, united so many of the qualifications necessary for its successful direction. But he had not received such an astronomical education as might enable him to give us the geography of the country with the precision desired. The Missouri and Columbia, which were to constitute the track of his journey, were rivers which varied little in their progressive latitudes, but changed their longitudes rapidly and at every step. To qualify him for making these observations, so important to the value of the enterprise, I encouraged him to apply himself to this particular object, and gave him letters to Doctor Patterson and Mr. Ellicott, requesting them to instruct him in the necessary processes. Those for the longitude would of course be founded on the lunar distances. But as these require essentially the aid of a timekeeper, it occurred to me that during a journey of two, three, or four years, exposed to so many accidents as himself and the instrument would be, we might expect with certainty that it would become deranged, and in a desert country where it could not be repaired. I thought it then highly important that some means of observation should be furnished him, if any could be, which should be practicable and

competent to ascertain his longitudes in that event. The equatorial occurred to myself as the most promising substitute. I observed only that Ramsden, in his explanation of its uses, and particularly that of finding the longitude at land, still required his observer to have the aid of a timekeeper. But this cannot be necessary, for the margin of the equatorial circle of this instrument being divided into time by hours, minutes, and seconds, supplies the main functions of the timekeeper, and for measuring merely the interval of the observations, is such as not to be neglected. A portable pendulum, for counting, by an assistant, would fully answer that purpose. I suggested my fears to several of our best astronomical friends, and my wishes that other processes should be furnished him, if any could be, which might guard us ultimately from disappointment. Several other methods were proposed, but all requiring the use of a timekeeper. That of the equatorial being recommended by none, and other duties refusing me time for protracted consultations, I relinquished the idea for that occasion. But, if a sound one, it should not be abandoned. Those deserts are yet to be explored, and their geography given to the world and ourselves with a correctness worthy of the science of the age. The acquisition of the country before Captain Lewis' departure facilitated our enterprise, but his timekeeper failed early in his journey. His dependence, then, was on the compass and log-line, with the correction of latitudes only; and the true longitudes of

the different points of the Missouri, of the Stony Mountains, the Columbia and Pacific, at its mouth, remain yet to be obtained by future enterprise.

The circumstance which occasions a recurrence of the subject to my mind at this time particularly is this: our legislature, some time ago, came to a determination that an accurate map should be made of our State. The late John Wood was employed on it. Its first elements are prepared by maps of the several counties. But these have been made by chain and compass only, which suppose the surface of the earth to be a plane. To fit them together, they must be accommodated to its real spherical surface; and this can be done only by observations of latitude and longitude, taken at different points of the area to which they are to be reduced. It is true that in the lower and more populous parts of the State, the method of lunar distances by the circle or sextant, and timekeeper, may be used; because those parts furnish means of repairing or replacing a deranged timekeeper. But the deserts beyond the Alleghany are as destitute of resource in that case, as those of the Missouri. The question then recurs whether the equatorial, without the auxiliary of a timekeeper, is not competent to the ascertainment of longitudes at land, where a fixed meridian can always be obtained? and whether indeed it may not everywhere at land, be a readier and preferable instrument for that purpose? To these questions I ask your attentions; and to show the grounds on

which I entertain the opinion myself, I will briefly explain the principles of the process, and the peculiarities of the instrument which give it the competence I ascribe to it. And should you concur in the opinion, I will further ask you to notice any particular circumstances claiming attention in the process, and the corrections which the observations may necessarily require. As to myself, I am an astronomer of theory only, little versed in practical observations, and the minute attentions and corrections they require. I proceed now to the explanation.

A method of finding the longitude of a place *at land, without a timekeeper.*

If two persons, at different points of the same hemisphere, (as Greenwich and Washington, for example,) observe the same celestial phenomenon, at the same instant of time, the difference of the times marked by their respective clocks is the difference of their longitudes, or the distance between their meridians. To catch with precision the same instant of time for these simultaneous observations, the moon's motion in her orbit is the best element; her change of place (about a half second of space in a second of time) is rapid enough to be ascertained by a good instrument with sufficient precision for the object. But suppose the observer at Washington, or in a desert, to be without a timekeeper; the equatorial is the instrument to be used in that case. Again, we have supposed a cotemporaneous observer at Greenwich. But his functions may be supplied

by the nautical almanac, adapted to that place, and enabling us to calculate for any instant of time the meridian distances there of the heavenly bodies necessary to be observed for this purpose.

The observer at Washington, choosing the time when their position is suitable, is to adjust his equatorial to his meridian, to his latitude, and to the plane of his horizon; or if he is in a desert where neither meridian nor latitude is yet ascertained, the advantages of this noble instrument are, that it enables him to find both in the course of a few hours. Thus prepared, let him ascertain by observation the right ascension of the moon from that of a known star, or their horary distance; and, at the same instant, her horary distance from his meridian. Her right ascension at the instant thus ascertained, enter with that of the nautical almanac, and calculate, by its tables, what was her horary distance from the meridian of Greenwich at the instant she had attained that point of right ascension, or that horary distance from the same star. The addition of these meridian distances, if the moon was between the two meridians, or the subtraction of the lesser from the greater, if she was on the same side of both, is the differences of their longitudes.

This general theory admits different cases, of which the observer may avail himself, according to the particular position of the heavenly bodies at the moment of observation.

Case 1st. When the moon is on his meridian, or on that of Greenwich.

Second. When the star is on either meridian.

Third. When the moon and star are on the same side of his meridian.

Fourth. When they are on different sides.

For instantaneousness of observation, the equatorial has great advantage over the circle or sextant; for being truly placed in the meridian beforehand, the telescope may be directed sufficiently in advance of the moon's motion, for time to note its place on the equatorial circle, before she attains that point. Then observe, until her limb touches the cross-hairs; and in that instant direct the telescope to the star; that completes the observation, and the place of the star may be read at leisure. The apparatus for correcting the effects of refraction and parallax, which is fixed on the eye-tube of the telescope, saves time by rendering the notation of altitudes unnecessary, and dispenses with the use of either a timekeeper or portable pendulum.

I have observed that, if placed in a desert where neither meridian nor latitude is yet ascertained, the equatorial enables the observer to find both in a few hours. For the latitude, adjust by the cross-levels the azimuth plane of the instrument to the horizon of the place. Bring down the equatorial plane to an exact parallelism with it, its pole then becoming vertical. By the nut and pinion commanding it, and by that of the semicircle of declination, direct the telescope to the sun. Follow its path with the telescope by the combined use of these two pinions,

and when it has attained its greatest altitude, calculate the latitude as when taken by a sextant.

For finding the meridian, set the azimuth circle to the horizon, elevate the equatorial circle to the complement of the latitude, and fix it by the clamp and tightening screw of the two brass segments of arches below. By the declination semicircle set the telescope to the sun's declination of the moment. Turn the instrument towards the meridian by guess, and by the combined movement of the equatorial and azimuth circles direct the telescope to the sun, then by the pinion of the equatorial alone, follow the path of the sun with the telescope. If it swerves from that path, turn the azimuth circle until it shall follow the sun accurately. A distant stake or tree should mark the meridian, to guard against its loss by any accidental jostle of the instrument. The 12 o'clock line will then be in the true meridian, and the axis of the equatorial circle will be parallel with that of the earth. The instrument is then in its true position for the observations of the night. To the competence and the advantages of this method, I will only add that these instruments are high-priced. Mine cost thirty-five guineas in Ramsden's shop, a little before the Revolution. I will lengthen my letter, already too long, only by assurances of my great esteem and respect.

TO MR NICHOLAS.

MONTICELLO, December 11, 1821.

DEAR SIR,—Your letter of December the 19th places me under a dilemma, which I cannot solve but by an exposition of the naked truth. I would have wished this rather to have remained as hitherto, without inquiry; but your inquiries have a right to be answered. I will do it as exactly as the great lapse of time and a waning memory will enable me. I may misremember indifferent circumstances, but can be right in substance.

At the time when the republicans of our country were so much alarmed at the proceedings of the federal ascendency in Congress, in the executive and the judiciary departments, it became a matter of serious consideration how head could be made against their enterprises on the Constitution. The leading republicans in Congress found themselves of no use there, browbeaten, as they were, by a bold and overwhelming majority. They concluded to retire from that field, take a stand in the State legislatures, and endeavor there to arrest their progress. The alien and sedition laws furnished the particular occasion. The sympathy between Virginia and Kentucky was more cordial, and more intimately confidential, than between any other two States of republican policy. Mr. Madison came into the Virginia legislature. I was then in the Vice-Presidency, and could not leave my station. But your father, Colonel W. C. Nicho-

las, and myself happening to be together, the engaging the co-operation of Kentucky in an energetic protestation against the constitutionality of those laws, became a subject of consultation. Those gentlemen pressed me strongly to sketch resolutions for that purpose, your father undertaking to introduce them to that legislature, with a solemn assurance, which I strictly required, that it should not be known from what quarter they came. I drew and delivered them to him, and in keeping their origin secret, he fulfilled his pledge of honor. Some years after this, Colonel Nicholas asked me if I would have any objection to its being known that I had drawn them. I pointedly enjoined that it should not. Whether he had unguardedly intimated it before to any one, I know not; but I afterwards observed in the papers repeated imputations of them to me; on which, as has been my practice on all occasions of imputation, I have observed entire silence. The question, indeed, has never before been put to me, nor should I answer it to any other than yourself; seeing no good end to be proposed by it, and the desire of tranquillity inducing with me a wish to be withdrawn from public notice. Your father's zeal and talents were too well known, to derive any additional distinction from the penning these resolutions. That circumstance, surely, was of far less merit than the proposing and carrying them through the legislature of his State. The only fact in this statement, on which my memory is not distinct, is the time and

occasion of the consultation with your father and Colonel Nicholas. It took place here, I know; but whether any other person was present, or communicated with, is my doubt. I think Mr. Madison was either with us, or consulted, but my memory is uncertain as to minute details.

I fear, dear Sir, we are now in such another crisis, with this difference only, that the judiciary branch is alone and single-handed in the present assaults on the Constitution. But its assaults are more sure and deadly, as from an agent seemingly passive and unassuming. May you and your cotemporaries meet them with the same determination and effect, as your father and his did the alien and sedition laws, and preserve inviolate a Constitution, which, cherished in all its chastity and purity, will prove in the end a blessing to all the nations of the earth. With these prayers, accept those for your own happiness and prosperity.

TO MESSRS. GEORGE W. SUMMERS AND JOHN B. GARLAND.

MONTICELLO, February 27, 1822.

GENTLEMEN,—I have received your favor of the 18th, and am duly sensible of the honor done my name by its association with the institution formed in your college for improvement in the art of speaking. The efforts of the members will, I trust, give a just reputation to the society and reflect on its name

the honor which it cannot derive from it. In a country and government like ours, eloquence is a powerful instrument, well worthy of the special pursuit of our youth. Models, indeed, of chaste and classical oratory are truly too rare with us; nor do I recollect any remarkable in England. Among the ancients the most perfect specimens are perhaps to be found in Livy, Sallust and Tacitus. Their pith and brevity constitute perfection itself for an audience of sages, on whom froth and fancy would be lost in air. But in ordinary cases, and with us particularly, more development is necessary. For senatorial eloquence, Demosthenes is the finest model; for the bar, Cicero. The former had more logic, the latter more imagination.

Of the eloquence of the pen we have fine samples in English. Robertson, Sterne, Addison, are of the first merit in the different characters of composition. Hume, in the circumstance of style, is equal to any; but his tory principles spread a cloud over his many and great excellencies. The charms of his style and matter have made tories of all England, and doubtful republicans here.

You say that any advice which I could give you would be acceptable. But, for this, you cannot be in better hands than of the worthy professors of your own college. Their counsels would, I am sure, embrace everything I could offer. It will not, however, be a work of mere supererogation if it will gratify you, and will furnish a stronger proof of my desire to

encourage you in your laudable dispositions. Some thirty-six or thirty-seven years ago, I had a nephew, the late Peter Carr, whose education I directed, and had much at heart his future fortunes. Residing abroad at the time in public service, my counsels to him were necessarily communicated by letters. Searching among my papers I find a letter written to him, and conveying such advice as I thought suitable to the particular period of his age and education. He was then about fifteen, and had made some progress in classical reading. As your present situation may be somewhat similar, you may find in that letter some things worth remembering. I enclose you a copy therefore. It was written in haste, under the pressure of official labors, and with no view of being ever seen but by himself. It might otherwise have been made more correct in style and matter. But such as it is, I place it at your service, and pray you to receive it merely as a compliance with your own request, and as a proof of my good will and of my best wishes for your success in the career of life for which you are so worthily and laudably preparing yourselves.

TO EDWARD EVERETT.

MONTICELLO, March 2, 1822.

I am thankful to you, Sir, for the very edifying view of Europe which you have been so kind as to send me. Tossed at random by the newspapers on

an ocean of uncertainties and falsehoods, it is joyful at times to catch the glimmering of a beacon which shows us truly where we are. De Pradt's Europe had some effect in this way; but the less as the author was less known in character. The views presented by your brother unite our confidence with the soundness of his observation and information. I have read the work with great avidity and profit, and have found my ideas of Europe in general, rallied by it to points of good satisfaction. In the single chapter on England only, where his theories are new, if we cannot suddenly give up all our old notions, he furnishes us abundant matter for reflection and a revisal of them. I have long considered the present crisis of England, and the origin of the evils which are lowering over her, as produced by enormous excess of her expenditures beyond her income. To pay even the interest of the debt contracted, she is obliged to take from the industrious so much of their earnings, as not to leave enough for their backs and bellies. They are daily, therefore, passing over to the pauper list, to subsist on the declining means of those still holding up, and when these also shall be exhausted, what next? Reformation cannot remedy this. It could only prevent its recurrence when once relieved from the debt. To effect that relief I see but one possible and just course. Considering the funded and real property as equal, and the debt as much of the one as the other, for the holders of property to give up one-half to those of the funds, and

the latter to the nation the whole of what it owes them. But this the nature of man forbids us to expect without blows, and blows will decide it by a promiscuous sacrifice of life and property. The debt thus, or otherwise, extinguished, a *real* representation introduced into the government of either property or people, or of both, renouncing eternal war, restraining future expenses to future income and breaking up forever the consuming circle of extravagance, debt, insolvency, and revolution, the island would then again be in the degree of force which nature has measured out to it, of respectable station in the scale of nations, but not at their head. I sincerely wish she could peaceably get into this state of being, as the present prospects of southern Europe seem to need the acquisition of new weights in their balance, rather than the loss of old ones. I set additional value on this volume, inasmuch as it has procured me the occasion of expressing to you my high estimation of your character, the interest with which I look to it as an American, and the great esteem and respect with which I beg leave to salute you.

TO JEDEDIAH MORSE.

MONTICELLO, March 6, 1822.

SIR,—I have duly received your letter of February the 16th, and have now to express my sense of the honorable station proposed to my ex-brethren and myself, in the constitution of the society for the

civilization and improvement of the Indian tribes. The object too expressed, as that of the association, is one which I have ever had much at heart, and never omitted an occasion of promoting while I have been in situations to do it with effect, and nothing, even now, in the calm of age and retirement, would excite in me a more lively interest than an approvable plan of raising that respectable and unfortunate people from the state of physical and moral abjection, to which they have been reduced by circumstances foreign to them. That the plan now proposed is entitled to unmixed approbation, I am not prepared to say, after mature consideration, and with all the partialities which its professed object would rightfully claim from me.

I shall not undertake to draw the line of demarcation between private associations of laudable views and unimposing numbers, and those whose magnitude may rivalize and jeopardize the march of regular government. Yet such a line does exist. I have seen the days, they were those which preceded the Revolution, when even this last and perilous engine became necessary; but they were days which no man would wish to see a second time. That was the case where the regular authorities of the government had combined against the rights of the people, and no means of correction remained to them but to organize a collateral power, which, with their support, might rescue and secure their violated rights. But such is not the case with our government. We

need hazard no collateral power, which, by a change of its original views, and assumption of others we know not how virtuous or how mischievous, would be ready organized and in force sufficient to shake the established foundations of society, and endanger its peace and the principles on which it is based. Is not the machine now proposed of this gigantic stature? It is to consist of the ex-Presidents of the United States, the Vice-President, the Heads of all the executive departments, the members of the supreme judiciary, the Governors of the several States and territories, all the members of both Houses of Congress, all the general officers of the army, the commissioners of the navy, all Presidents and Professors of colleges and theological seminaries, all the clergy of the United States, the Presidents and Secretaries of all associations having relation to Indians, all commanding officers within or near Indian territories, all Indian superintendents and agents; all these *ex officio;* and as many private individuals as will pay a certain price for membership. Observe, too, that the clergy will constitute[1] nineteen-twentieths of this association, and, by the law of the majority, may command the twentieth part, which, composed of all the high authorities of the United States, civil and military, may be outvoted and wielded by the nineteen parts with uncon-

[1] The clergy of the United States may probably be estimated at eight thousand. The residue of this society at four hundred; but if the former number be halved, the reasoning will be the same.

trollable power, both as to purpose and process. Can this formidable array be reviewed without dismay? It will be said, that in this association will be all the confidential officers of the government; the choice of the people themselves. No man on earth has more implicit confidence than myself in the integrity and discretion of this chosen band of servants. But is confidence or discretion, or is *strict limit*, the principle of our Constitution? It will comprehend, indeed, all the functionaries of the government; but seceded from their constitutional stations as guardians of the nation, and acting not by the laws of their station, but by those of a voluntary society, having no limit to their purposes but the same will which constitutes their existence. It will be the authorities of the people and all influential characters from among them, arrayed on one side, and on the other, the people themselves deserted by their leaders. It is a fearful array. It will be said that these are imaginary fears. I know they are so at present. I know it is as impossible for these agents of our choice and unbounded confidence, to harbor machinations against the adored principles of our Constitution, as for gravity to change its direction, and gravid bodies to mount upwards. The fears are indeed imaginary, but the example is *real*. Under its authority, as a precedent, future associations will arise with objects at which we should shudder at this time. The society of Jacobins, in another country, was instituted on principles and

views as virtuous as ever kindled the hearts of patriots. It was the pure patriotism of their purposes which extended their association to the limits of the nation, and rendered their power within it boundless; and it was this power which degenerated their principles and practices to such enormities as never before could have been imagined. Yet these were men, and we and our descendants will be no more. The present is a case where, if ever, we are to guard against ourselves; not against ourselves as we are, but as we may be; for who can now imagine what we may become under circumstances not now imaginable? The object of this institution, seems to require so hazardous an example as little as any which could be proposed. The government is, at this time, going on with the process of civilizing the Indians, on a plan probably as promising as any one of us is able to devise, and with resources more competent than we could expect to command by voluntary taxation. Is it that the new characters called into association with those of the government, are wiser than these? Is it that a plan originated by a meeting of private individuals is better than that prepared by the concentrated wisdom of the nation, of men not self-chosen, but clothed with the full confidence of the people? Is it that there is no danger that a new authority, marching, independently, alongside of the government, in the same line and to the same object, may not produce collision, may not thwart and obstruct the operations of the gov-

ernment, or wrest the object entirely from their hands? Might we not as well appoint a committee for each department of the government, to counsel and direct its head separately, as volunteer ourselves to counsel and direct the whole, in mass? And might we not do it as well for their foreign, their fiscal, and their military, as for their Indian affairs? And how many societies, auxiliary to the government, may we expect to see spring up, in imitation of this, offering to associate themselves in this and that of its functions? In a word, why not take the government out of its constitutional hands, associate them indeed with us, to preserve a semblance that the acts are theirs, but insuring them to be our own by allowing them a minor vote only.

These considerations have impressed my mind with a force so irresistible, that (in duty bound to answer your polite letter, without which I should not have obtruded an opinion) I have not been able to withhold the expression of them. Not knowing the individuals who have proposed this plan, I cannot be conceived as entertaining personal disrespect for them. On the contrary, I see in the printed list persons for whom I cherish sentiments of sincere friendship, and others, for whose opinions and purity of purpose I have the highest respect. Yet thinking as I do, that this association is unnecessary; that the government is proceeding to the same object under control of the law; that they are competent to it in wisdom, in means, and inclination; that this

association, this wheel within a wheel, is more likely to produce collision than aid; and that it is, in its magnitude, of dangerous example; I am bound to say, that, as a dutiful citizen, I cannot in conscience become a member of this society, possessing as it does my entire confidence in the integrity of its views. I feel with awe the weight of opinion to which I may be opposed, and that, for myself, I have need to ask the indulgence of a belief that the opinion I have given is the best result I can deduce from my own reason and experience, and that it is sincerely conscientious. Repeating, therefore, my just acknowledgments for the honor proposed to me, I beg leave to add the assurances to the society and yourself of my highest confidence and consideration.

TO GENERAL JAMES BRECKINRIDGE.

MONTICELLO, April 9, 1822.

DEAR GENERAL,—Your favor of March 28th was received on the 7th instant. We failed in having a quorum on the 1st. Mr. Johnson and General Taylor were laboring for Lithgow in Richmond, and Mr. Madison was unwell. On the score of business it was immaterial, as there was not a single measure to be proposed. The loss was of the gratification of meeting in society with those whom we esteem. This is the valuable effect of our semi-annual meetings, jubilees, in fact, for feasting the mind and fos-

tering the best affections of the heart towards those who merit them.

The four rows of buildings of accommodation are so nearly completed, that they are certain of being entirely so in the course of the summer; and our funds, as you have seen stated in our last Report, are sufficient to meet the expense, except that the delays in collecting the arrears of subscriptions oblige us to borrow temporarily from this year's annuity, which, according to that Report, had another destination. These buildings done, we are to rest on our oars, and passively await the will of the legislature. Our future course is a plain one. We have proceeded from the beginning on the sound determination to finish the buildings before opening the institution; because, once opened, all its funds will be absorbed by professors' salaries, etc., and nothing remain ever to finish the buildings. And we have thought it better to begin two or three years later, in the full extent proposed, than to open, and go on forever, with a half-way establishment. Of the wisdom of this proceeding, and of its greater good to the public finally, I cannot a moment doubt. Our part then is to pursue with steadiness what is right, turning neither to right nor left for the intrigues or popular delusions of the day, assured that the public approbation will in the end be with us. The councils of the legislature, at their late session, were poisoned unfortunately by the question of the seat of government, and the consequent jealousies

of our views in erecting the large building still wanting. This lost us some friends who feel a sincere interest in favor of the University, but a stronger one in the question respecting the seat of government. They seem not to have considered that the seat of the government, and that of the University, are incompatible with one another; that if the former were to come here, the latter must be removed. Even Oxford and Cambridge, placed in the middle of London, they would be deserted as seats of learning, and as proper places for training youth. These groundless jealousies, it is to be hoped, will be dissipated by sober reflection, during the separation of the members; and they will perceive, before their next meeting, that the large building, without which the institution cannot proceed, has nothing to do with the question of the seat of government. If, however, the ensuing session should still refuse their patronage, a second or a third will think better, and result finally in fulfilling the object of our aim, the securing to our country a full and perpetual institution for all the useful sciences; one which will restore us to our former station in the confederacy. It may be a year or two later indeed; but it will replace us in full grade, and not leave us among the mere subalterns of the league. Patience and steady perseverance on our part will secure the blessed end. If we shrink, it is gone forever. Our autumnal meeting will be interesting. The question will be whether we shall relinquish the scale of a real Univer-

sity, the rallying centre of the South and the West, or let it sink to that of a common academy. I hope you will be with us, and give us the benefit of your firm and enlarged views. I am not at all disheartened with what has passed, nor disposed to give up the ship. We have only to lie still, to do and say nothing, and firmly avoid opening. The public opinion is advancing. It is coming to our aid, and will force the institution on to consummation. The numbers are great, and many from great distances, who visit it daily as an object of curiosity. They become strengthened if friends, converted if enemies, and all loud and zealous advocates, and will shortly give full tone to the public voice. Our motto should be "be not wearied with well-doing." Accept the assurance of my affectionate friendship and respect.

TO MESSRS. RITCHIE AND GOOCH.

MONTICELLO, May 13, 1822.

MESSRS. RITCHIE AND GOOCH,—I am thankful to you for the paper you have been so kind as to send me, containing the arraignment of the Presidents of the United States generally, as peculators or accessories to peculation, by an informer who masks himself under the signature of a "Native Virginian." What relates to myself in this paper, (being his No. VI, and the only No. I have seen) I had before read in the "Federal Republican" of Baltimore, of August 28th, which was sent to me by a friend, with the real

name of the author. It was published there during the ferment of a warmly-contested election. I considered it, therefore, as an electioneering manœuvre merely, and did not even think it required the trouble of recollecting, after a lapse of thirty-three years, the circumstances of the case in which he charges me with having purloined from the treasury of the United States the sum of $1,148. But as he has thought it worth repeating in his Roll of informations against your Presidents nominally, I shall give the truths of the case, which he has omitted, perhaps because he did not know them, and ventured too inconsiderately to supply them from his own conjectures.

On the return from my mission to France, and joining the government here, in the spring of 1790, I had a long and heavy account to settle with the United States, of the administration of their pecuniary affairs in Europe, of which the superintendence had been confided to me while there. I gave in my account early, but the pressure of other business did not permit the accounting officers to attend to it till October 10th, 1792, when we settled, and a balance of $888.67 appearing to be due from me, (but erroneously as will be shown,) I paid the money the same day, delivered up my vouchers, and received a certificate of it. But still the articles of my draughts on the bankers could be only *provisionally* passed; until their accounts also should be received to be confronted with mine. And it was not till the 24th

of June, 1804, that I received a letter from Mr. Richard Harrison the auditor, informing me "that my accounts, as Minister to France, had been adjusted and closed," adding, "the bill drawn and credited by you under date of the 21st of October, 1789, for Banco florins 2,800, having never yet appeared in any account of the Dutch bankers, stand at your debit only as a *provisional* charge. If it should hereafter turn out, as I incline to think it will, that this bill has never been negotiated or used by Mr. Grand, you will have a just claim on the public for its value." This was the first intimation to me that I had too hastily charged myself with that draught. I determined, however, as I had allowed it in my account, and paid up the balance it had produced against me, to let it remain awhile, as there was a possibility that the draught might still be presented by the holder to the bankers; and so it remained till I was near leaving Washington, on my final retirement from the administration in 1809. I then received from the auditor, Mr. Harrison, the following note: "Mr. Jefferson, in his accounts as late Minister to France, credited among other sums, a bill drawn by him on the 21st October, 1789, to the order of Grand & Co., on the bankers of the United States at Amsterdam, f. Banco f. 2,800, equal with *agio* to current florins 2,870, and which was charged to him *provisionally* in the official statement made at the Treasury, in the month of October, 1804. But as this bill has not yet been noticed in

any account rendered by the bankers, the presumption is strong that it was never negotiated or presented for payment, and Mr. Jefferson, therefore, appears justly entitled to receive the value of it, which, at forty cents the gilder, (the rate at which it was estimated in the above-mentioned statement,) amounts to $1,148. Auditor's office, January 24th, 1809."

Desirous of leaving nothing unsettled behind me, I drew the money from the treasury, but without any interest, although I had let it lie there twenty years, and had actually on that error paid $888.67, an apparent balance against me, when the true balance was in my favor $259.33. The question then is, how has this happened? I have examined minutely and can state it clearly.

Turning to my pocket diary I find that on the 21st day of October, 1789, the date of this bill, I was at Cowes in England, on my return to the United States. The entry in my diary is in these words: "1789, October 21st. Sent to Grand & Co., letter of credit on Willinks, Van Staphorsts and Hubbard, for 2,800 florins Banco." And I immediately credited it in my account with the United States in the following words: "1789, October 21. By my bill on Willinks, Van Staphorsts and Hubbard, in favor of Grand & Co., for 2,800 florins, equal to 6,250 livres 18 sous." My account having been kept in livres and sous of France, the auditor settled this sum at the current exchange, making it $1,148. This bill, drawn at

Cowes in England, had to pass through London to Paris by the English and French mails, in which passage it was lost, by some unknown accident, to which it was the more exposed in the French mail, by the confusion then prevailing; for it was exactly at the time that martial law was proclaimed at Paris, the country all up in arms, and executions by the mobs were daily perpetrating through town and country. However this may have been, the bill never got to the hands of Grand & Co., was never, of course, forwarded by them to the bankers of Amsterdam, nor anything more ever heard of it. The auditor's first conjecture then was the true one, that it never was negotiated, nor therefore charged to the United States in any of the bankers' accounts. I have now under my eye a duplicate furnished me by Grand of his account of that date against the United States, and his private account against myself, and I affirm that he has not noticed this bill in either of these accounts, and the auditor assures us the Dutch bankers had never charged it. The sum of the whole then is, that I drew a bill on the United States bankers, charged myself with it on the presumption it would be paid, that it never was paid however, either by the bankers of the United States, or anybody else. It was surely just, then, to return me the money I had paid for it. Yet the "Native Virginian" thinks that this act of receiving back the money I had thus through error overpaid, "*was a palpable and manifest act of moral turpitude, about which no two honest, im-*

partial men can possibly differ." I ascribe these hard expressions to the ardor of his zeal for the public good, and as they contain neither argument nor proof, I pass them over without observation. Indeed, I have not been in the habit of noticing these morbid ejections of spleen either with or without the names of those venting them. But I have thought it a duty on the present occasion to relieve my fellow citizens and my country from the degradation in the eyes of the world to which this informer is endeavoring to reduce it by representing it as governed hitherto by a succession of swindlers and peculators. Nor shall I notice any further endeavors to prove or to palliate this palpable misinformation. I am too old and inert to undertake minute investigations of intricate transactions of the last century; and I am not afraid to trust to the justice and good sense of my fellow citizens on future, as on former attempts to lessen me in their esteem.

I ask of you, gentlemen, the insertion of this letter in your paper; and I trust that the printers who have hazarded the publication of the libel, on anonymous authority, will think that of the answer a moderate retribution of the wrong to which they have been accessory.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

MONTICELLO, June 1, 1822.

It is very long, my dear Sir, since I have written to you. My dislocated wrist is now become so stiff

that I write slow and with pain, and therefore write as little as I can. Yet it is due to mutual friendship to ask once in awhile how we do? The papers tell us that General Stark is off at the age of 93. Charles Thomson still lives at about the same age, cheerful, slender as a grasshopper, and so much without memory that he scarcely recognizes the members of his household. An intimate friend of his called on him not long since; it was difficult to make him recollect who he was, and, sitting one hour, he told him the same story four times over. Is this life?

"With lab'ring step
To tread our former footsteps? pace the round
Eternal?—to beat and beat
The beaten track? to see what we have seen,
To taste the tasted? o'er our palates to decant
Another vintage?"

It is at most but the life of a cabbage; surely not worth a wish. When all our faculties have left, or are leaving us, one by one, sight, hearing, memory, every avenue of pleasing sensation is closed, and athumy, debility and malaise left in their places, when friends of our youth are all gone, and a generation is risen around us whom we know not, is death an evil?

"When one by one our ties are torn,
And friend from friend is snatched forlorn,
When man is left alone to mourn,
Oh! then how sweet it is to die!
When trembling limbs refuse their weight,
And films slow gathering dim the sight,
When clouds obscure the mental light
'Tis nature's kindest boon to die!"

I really think so. I have ever dreaded a doting old age; and my health has been generally so good, and is now so good, that I dread it still. The rapid decline of my strength during the last winter has made me hope sometimes that I see land. During summer I enjoy its temperature, but I shudder at the approach of winter, and wish I could sleep through it with the dormouse, and only wake with him in spring, if ever. They say that Stark could walk about his room. I am told you walk well and firmly. I can only reach my garden, and that with sensible fatigue. I ride, however, daily. But reading is my delight. I should wish never to put pen to paper; and the more because of the treacherous practice some people have of publishing one's letters without leave. Lord Mansfield declared it a breach of trust, and punishable at law. I think it should be a penitentiary felony; yet you will have seen that they have drawn me out into the arena of the newspapers; although I know it is too late for me to buckle on the armor of youth, yet my indignation would not permit me passively to receive the kick of an ass.

To turn to the news of the day, it seems that the cannibals of Europe are going to eating one another again. A war between Russia and Turkey is like the battle of the kite and snake. Whichever destroys the other, leaves a destroyer the less for the world. This pugnacious humor of mankind seems to be the law of his nature, one of the obstacles to too great multiplication provided in the mechanism of the uni-

verse. The cocks of the henyard kill one another up. Bears, bulls, rams, do the same. And the horse, in his wild state, kills all the young males, until worn down with age and war, some vigorous youth kills him, and takes to himself the harem of females. I hope we shall prove how much happier for man the Quaker policy is, and that the life of the feeder, is better than that of the fighter; and it is some consolation that the desolation by these maniacs of one part of the earth is the means of improving it in other parts. Let the latter be our office, and let us milk the cow, while the Russian holds her by the horns, and the Turk by the tail. God bless you, and give you health, strength, and good spirits, and as much of life as you think worth having.

TO REV. THOMAS WHITTEMORE.

MONTICELLO, June 5, 1822.

I thank you, Sir, for the pamphlets you have been so kind as to send me, and am happy to learn that the doctrine of Jesus that there is but one God, is advancing prosperously among our fellow citizens. Had His doctrines, pure as they came from Himself, been never sophisticated for unworthy purposes, the whole civilized world would at this day have formed but a single sect. You ask my opinion on the items of doctrine in your catechism. I have never permitted myself to meditate a specified creed. These formulas have been the bane and ruin of the Christian

church, its own fatal invention, which, through so many ages, made of Christendom a slaughter-house, and at this day divides it into castes of inextinguishable hatred to one another. Witness the present internecine rage of all other sects against the Unitarian. The religions of antiquity had no particular formulas of creed. Those of the modern world none, except those of the religionists calling themselves Christians, and even among these the Quakers have none. And hence, alone, the harmony, the quiet, the brotherly affections, the exemplary and unschismatizing Society of the Friends, and I hope the Unitarians will follow their happy example. With these sentiments of the mischiefs of creeds and confessions of faith, I am sure you will excuse my not giving opinions on the items of any particular one; and that you will accept, at the same time, the assurance of the high respect and consideration which I bear to its author.

TO MESSRS. RITCHIE AND GOOCH.

MONTICELLO, June 10, 1822.

MESSRS. RITCHIE AND GOOCH,—In my letter to you of May 13th, in answer to a charge by a person signing himself a "Native Virginian," that on a bill drawn by me for a sum equivalent to $1,148, the treasury of the United States had made *double payment*, I supposed I had done as much as would be required when I showed they had only returned to

me money which I had previously paid into the treasury on the presumption that such a bill had been paid for me, but that this bill being lost or destroyed on the way, had never been presented, consequently never paid by the United States, and that the money was therefore returned to me. This being too plain for controversy, the pseudo Native of Virginia, in his reply, No. 32, in the Federal Republican of May 24th, reduces himself ultimately to the ground of a *double receipt* of the money by me, first on sale or negotiation of the bill in Europe, and a second time from the treasury. But the bill was never sold or negotiated anywhere. It was not drawn to raise money in the market. I sold it to nobody, received no money on it, but enclosed it to Grand & Co. for some purpose of account, for what particular purpose neither my memory, after a lapse of thirty-three years, nor my papers enable me to say. Had I preserved a copy of my letter to Grand enclosing the bill, that would doubtless have explained the purpose. But it was drawn on the eve of my embarkation with my family from Cowes for America, and probably the hurry of preparation for that did not allow me time to take a copy. I presume this because I find no such letter among my papers. Nor does any subsequent correspondence with Grand explain it, because I had no private account with him; my account as minister being kept with the treasury directly, so that he, receiving no intimation of this bill, could never give me notice of its miscar-

riage. But, however satisfactory might have been an explanation of the purpose of the bill, it is unnecessary at least; the material fact being established that it never got to hand, nor was ever paid by the United States.

And how does the Native Virginian maintain his charge that I received the cash when I drew the bill? by unceremoniously inserting into the entry of that article in my account, words of his own, making me say in direct terms that I did receive the cash for the bill. In my account rendered to the treasury, it is entered in these words: "1789, Oct. 1. By my bill on Willincks, Van Staphorsts & Hubbard in favor of Grand & Co. for 2,800 florins, equal to 6,230 livres 18 sous;" but he quotes it as stated in my account rendered to and settled at the treasury, and yet remaining, as it is to be presumed, among the archives of that department, "*By cash received of Grand* for bill on Willincks, &c." Now the words "*cash received of Grand*" constitute "the very point, the pivot, on which the matter turns," as himself says, and not finding, he has furnished them. Although the interpolation of them is sufficiently refuted by the fact that Grand was, at the time, in France, and myself in England, yet wishing that conviction of the interpolation should be founded on official document, I wrote to the auditor, Mr. Harrison, requesting an official certificate of the *very words* in which that article stood in my autograph account deposited in the office. I received yesterday his answer of the 3d,

in which he says, "I am unable to furnish the extract you require, as the original account rendered by you of your pecuniary transactions of a public nature in Europe, together with the vouchers and documents connected with it, were all destroyed in the Register's Office in the memorable conflagration of 1814. With respect, therefore, to the sum of $1,148 in question, I can only say that, after full and repeated examinations, I considered you as most righteously and justly entitled to receive it. Otherwise, it will, I trust, be believed that I could not have consented to the repayment." Considering the intimacy which the Native Virginian shows with the treasury affairs, we might be justified in suspecting that he knew this fact of the destruction of the original by fire when he ventured to misquote. But certainly we may call on him to say, and to show, from what original he copied these words: "cash received from Grand"? I say, most assuredly, from none, for none such ever existed. Although the original be lost, which would have convicted him officially, it happens that when I made from my rough draft a fair copy of my account for the treasury, I took also, with a copying-machine, a press-copy of every page, which I kept for my own use. It is known that copies by this well-known machine are taken by impression on damp paper laid on the face of the written page while fresh, and passed between rollers as copper plates are. They must therefore be true *fac similes*. This press-copy now lies before me, has been shown to several persons,

and will be shown to as many as wish or are willing to examine it; and this article of my account is entered in it in these words: "1789, Oct. 1. By my bill on Willincks, Van Staphorsts & Hubbard for 2,800 florins, equal to 6,230 livres 18 sous." An inspection of the account, too, shows that whenever I received *cash* for a bill, it is uniformly entered "by cash received of such an one, etc.;" but where a bill was drawn to constitute an item of account only, the entry is "by my bill on, etc." Now to these very words "cash received of Grand," not in my original but interpolated by himself, he constantly appeals as proofs of an acknowledgment *under my own hand* that *I received the cash*. In proof of this, I must request patience to read the following quotations from his denunciations as standing in the Federal Republican of May 24:

Page 2, column 2, l. 48 to 29 from the bottom, "he [Mr. J.] admits in his account rendered in 1790 and settled in 1792, that he had *received the 'cash,'* [placing the word *cash* between inverted commas to have it marked particularly as a quotation] that he had *received the 'cash'* for the bill in question, and he does not directly deny it now. Will he, can he, in the *face of his own declaration in writing* to the contrary, publicly say that he did not receive the money for this bill in Europe? This is *the point* on which the whole matter rests, the *pivot* on which the arguments turn. If he did receive the money in Europe, (no matter whether at Cowes or at Paris,) he certainly

had no right to receive it a second time from the public treasury of the United States. This is admitted I believe on all sides. Now, *that he did receive the money in Europe* on this bill, is proved by the *acknowledgment of the receiver himself*, who credits the amount in his account as settled at the treasury thus: "*cash received of Grand* for bill on Willincks, Van Staphorsts, 2,876 gilders, 1,148 dollars."

Col. 3, l. 28 to 21 from bottom. There is a plain difference in the phraseology of the account, from which an extract is given by Mr. J. as above, and that *which he rendered to the Treasury*. In the former he gives the credit thus, "By my bills on Willincks," etc. In the latter he states, "By *cash received of Grand* for bill on Willincks, etc." There is a difference, indeed, as he states it, but it is made solely by his own interpolation.

Col. 3, l. 8 from bottom. "That Mr. Jefferson should, in the very teeth of the facts of the evidence before us, and in his own breast, gravely say that he had paid the money for this bill, and that therefore it was but just to return him the amount of it, when he had, *by his own acknowledgment*, sent it to Grand & Co., and *received the money for it*, is, I confess, not only matter of utter astonishment but regret." I spare myself the qualifications which these paragraphs may merit, leaving them to be applied by every reader according to the feelings they may excite in his own breast.

He proceeds: "And now to place this case beyond

the reach of cavil or doubt, and to show *most conclusively* that he had negotiated this bill in Europe, and *received the cash* for it there, and that such was the understanding of the matter at the treasury in 1809, when he received the money." These are his own words. Col. 4, he brings forward the overwhelming fact "not hitherto made public, but stated from the most creditable and authentic source, that one of the accounting officers of the treasury suggested in writing the propriety of taking bond and security from Mr. J., for indemnification of the United States against any future claim on this bill. But it seems the bond was not taken, and the government is now liable in law, and in good faith for the payment of this bill to the rightful owner." How this suggestion of taking bond at the treasury, so solemnly paraded, is *more conclusive* proof than his own interpolation, that the *cash was received*, I am so dull as not to perceive; but I say, that had the suggestion been made to me, it would have been instantly complied with. But I deny his law. Were the bill now to be presented to the treasury, the answer would and should be the same as a merchant would give: "You have held up this bill three and thirty years without notice; we have settled in the meantime with the drawer, and have no effects of his left in our hands. Apply to him for payment." On his application to me, I should first inquire into the history of the bill; where it had been lurking for three and thirty years? how came he by it? by interception? by trover? by

assignment from Grand? by purchase? from whom, when and where? And according to his answers I should either institute criminal process against him, or if he showed that all was fair and honest, I should pay him the money, and look for reimbursement to the quarter appearing liable. The law deems seven years' absence of a man, without being heard of, such presumptive evidence of his death, as to distribute his estate, and to allow his wife to marry again. The Auditor thought that twenty years' non-appearance of a bill which had been risked through the post-offices of two nations, was sufficient presumption of its loss. But this self-styled Native of Virginia thinks that the thirty-three years now elapsed are not sufficient. Be it so. If the accounting officers of the treasury have any uneasiness on that subject, I am ready to give a bond of indemnification to the United States in any sum the officers will name, and with the security which themselves shall approve. Will this satisfy the Native Virginian? or will he now try to pick some other hole in this transaction, to shield himself from a candid acknowledgment, that in making up his case, he supplied by gratuitous conjectures, the facts which were not within his knowledge, and that thus he has sinned against truth in his declarations before the public? Be this as it may, I have so much confidence in the discernment and candor of my fellow citizens, as to leave to their judgment, and dismiss from my own notice any future torture of words or circumstances

which this writer may devise for their deception. Indeed, could such a denunciation, and on such proof, bereave me of that confidence and consolation, I should, through the remainder of life, brood over the afflicting belief that I had lived and labored in vain.

TO JOHN M. GOODENOW.

MONTICELLO, June 13, 1822.

SIR,—I thank you for the volume of American Jurisprudence, which you have been so kind as to send me. I am now too old to read books solidly unless they promise present amusement or future benefit. To me books of law offer neither. But I read your 6th chapter with interest and satisfaction, on the question whether the common law (of England) makes a part of the laws of our General Government? That it makes more or less a part of the laws of the States is, I suppose, an unquestionable fact. Not by *birthright*, a conceit as inexplicable as the Trinity, but by adoption. But, as to the General Government, the Virginia Report on the alien and sedition laws, has so completely pulverized this pretension that nothing new can be said on it. Still, seeing that judges of the Supreme Court, (I recollect, for example, Elsworth and Story) had been found capable of such paralogism, I was glad to see that the Supreme Court had given it up. In the case of Libel in the United States District Court of Connecticut, the

rejection of it was certainly sound; because no law of the General Government had made it an offence. But such a case might, I suppose, be sustained in the State courts which have State laws against libels. Because as to the portions of power within each State assigned to the General Government, the President is as much the Executive of the State, as their particular Governor is in relation to State powers. These, however, are speculations with which I no longer trouble myself; and therefore, to my thanks, I will only add assurances of my great respect.

TO DOCTOR BENJAMIN WATERHOUSE.

MONTICELLO, June 26, 1822.

DEAR SIR,—I have received and read with thankfulness and pleasure your denunciation of the abuses of tobacco and wine. Yet, however sound in its principles, I expect it will be but a sermon to the wind. You will find it is as difficult to inculcate these sanative precepts on the sensualities of the present day, as to convince an Athanasian that there is but one God. I wish success to both attempts, and am happy to learn from you that the latter, at least, is making progress, and the more rapidly in proportion as our Platonizing Christians make more stir and noise about it. The doctrines of Jesus are simple, and tend all to the happiness of man.

1. That there is one only God, and He all perfect.

2. That there is a future state of rewards and punishments.

3. That to love God with all thy heart and thy neighbor as thyself, is the sum of religion. These are the great points on which He endeavored to reform the religion of the Jews. But compare with these the demoralizing dogmas of Calvin.

1. That there are three Gods.

2. That good works, or the love of our neighbor, are nothing.

3. That faith is everything, and the more incomprehensible the proposition, the more merit in its faith.

4. That reason in religion is of unlawful use.

5. That God, from the beginning, elected certain individuals to be saved, and certain others to be damned; and that no crimes of the former can damn them; no virtues of the latter save.

Now, which of these is the true and charitable Christian? He who believes and acts on the simple doctrines of Jesus? Or the impious dogmatists, as Athanasius and Calvin? Verily I say these are the false shepherds foretold as to enter not by the door into the sheepfold, but to climb up some other way. They are mere usurpers of the Christian name, teaching a counter-religion made up of the *deliria* of crazy imaginations, as foreign from Christianity as is that of Mahomet. Their blasphemies have driven thinking men into infidelity, who have too hastily

rejected the supposed Author himself, with the horrors so falsely imputed to Him. Had the doctrines of Jesus been preached always as pure as they came from his lips, the whole civilized world would now have been Christian. I rejoice that in this blessed country of free inquiry and belief, which has surrendered its creed and conscience to neither kings nor priests, the genuine doctrine of one only God is reviving, and I trust that there is not a *young man* now living in the United States who will not die an Unitarian.

But much I fear, that when this great truth shall be re-established, its votaries will fall into the fatal error of fabricating formulas of creed and confessions of faith, the engines which so soon destroyed the religion of Jesus, and made of Christendom a mere Aceldama; that they will give up morals for mysteries, and Jesus for Plato. How much wiser are the Quakers, who, agreeing in the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, schismatize about no mysteries, and, keeping within the pale of common sense, suffer no speculative differences of opinion, any more than of feature, to impair the love of their brethren. Be this the wisdom of Unitarians, this the holy mantle which shall cover within its charitable circumference all who believe in one God, and who love their neighbor! I conclude my sermon with sincere assurances of my friendly esteem and respect.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

MONTICELLO, June 27, 1822.

DEAR SIR,—Your kind letter of the 11th has given me great satisfaction. For although I could not doubt but that the hand of age was pressing heavily on you, as on myself, yet we like to know the particulars and the degree of that pressure. Much reflection, too, has been produced by your suggestion of lending my letter of the 1st, to a printer. I have generally great aversion to the insertion of my letters in the public papers; because of my passion for quiet retirement, and never to be exhibited in scenes on the public stage. Nor am I unmindful of the precept of Horace, "*solvere senescentem, mature sanus equum, ne peccet ad extremum ridendus.*" In the present case, however, I see a possibility that this might aid in producing the very quiet after which I pant. I do not know how far you may suffer, as I do, under the persecution of letters, of which every mail brings a fresh load. They are letters of inquiry, for the most part, always of good will, sometimes from friends whom I esteem, but much oftener from persons whose names are unknown to me, but written kindly and civilly, and to which, therefore, civility requires answers. Perhaps the better known failure of your hand in its function of writing, may shield you in greater degree from this distress, and so far qualify the misfortune of its disability. I happened to turn to my letter-list some time ago,

and a curiosity was excited to count those received in a single year. It was the year before the last. I found the number to be one thousand two hundred and sixty-seven, many of them requiring answers of elaborate research, and all to be answered with due attention and consideration. Take an average of this number for a week or a day, and I will repeat the question suggested by other considerations in mine of the 1st. Is this life? At best it is but the life of a mill-horse, who sees no end to his circle but in death. To such a life, that of a cabbage is paradise. It occurs then, that my condition of existence, truly stated in that letter, if better known, might check the kind indiscretions which are so heavily oppressing the departing hours of life. Such a relief would, to me, be an ineffable blessing. But yours of the 11th, equally interesting and affecting, should accompany that to which it is an answer. The two, taken together, would excite a joint interest, and place before our fellow citizens the present condition of two ancient servants, who having faithfully performed their forty or fifty campaigns, *stipendiis omnibus expletis*, have a reasonable claim to repose from all disturbance in the sanctuary of invalids and superannuates. But some device should be thought of for their getting before the public otherwise than by our own publication. Your printer, perhaps, could frame something plausible. ********'s name should be left blank, as his picture, should it meet his eye, might give him pain. I consign, however,

the whole subject to your consideration, to do in it whatever your own judgment shall approve, and repeat always, with truth, the assurance of my constant and affectionate friendship and respect.

TO WILLIAM T. BARRY.

MONTICELLO, July 2, 1822.

SIR,—Your favor of the 15th of June is received, and I am very thankful for the kindness of its expressions respecting myself. But it ascribes to me merits which I do not claim. I was only of a band devoted to the cause of independence, all of whom exerted equally their best endeavors for its success, and have a common right to the merits of its acquisition. So also is the civil revolution of 1801. Very many and very meritorious were the worthy patriots who assisted in bringing back our government to its republican tack. To preserve it in that, will require unremitting vigilance. Whether the surrender of our opponents, their reception into our camp, their assumption of our name, and apparent accession to our objects, may strengthen or weaken the genuine principles of republicanism, may be a good or an evil, is yet to be seen. I consider the party division of Whig and Tory the most wholesome which can exist in any government, and well worthy of being nourished, to keep out those of a more dangerous character. We already see the power, installed for life,

responsible to no authority, (for impeachment is not even a scare-crow,) advancing with a noiseless and steady pace to the great object of consolidation. The foundations are already deeply laid by their decisions, for the annihilation of constitutional State rights, and the removal of every check, every counterpoise to the ingulfing power of which themselves are to make a sovereign part. If ever this vast country is brought under a single government, it will be one of the most extensive corruption, indifferent and incapable of a wholesome care over so wide a spread of surface. This will not be borne, and you will have to choose between reformation and revolution. If I know the spirit of this country, the one or the other is inevitable. Before the canker is become inveterate, before its venom has reached so much of the body politic as to get beyond control, remedy should be applied. Let the future appointments of judges be for four or six years, and renewable by the President and Senate. This will bring their conduct, at regular periods, under revision and probation, and may keep them in equipoise between the general and special governments. We have erred in this point, by copying England, where certainly it is a good thing to have the judges independent of the king. But we have omitted to copy their caution also, which makes a judge removable on the address of both legislative Houses. That there should be public functionaries independent of the nation, whatever may be their demerit, is a

solecism in a republic, of the first order of absurdity and inconsistency.

To the printed inquiries respecting our schools, it is not in my power to give an answer. Age, debility, an ancient dislocated, and now stiffened wrist, render writing so slow and painful, that I am obliged to decline everything possible requiring writing. An act of our legislature will inform you of our plan of primary schools, and the annual reports show that it is becoming completely abortive, and must be abandoned very shortly, after costing us to this day one hundred and eighty thousand dollars, and yet to cost us forty-five thousand dollars a year more until it shall be discontinued; and if a single boy has received the elements of common education, it must be in some part of the country not known to me. Experience has but too fully confirmed the early predictions of its fate. But on this subject I must refer you to others more able than I am to go into the necessary details; and I conclude with the assurances of my great esteem and respect.

TO DOCTOR BENJAMIN WATERHOUSE.

MONTICELLO, July 19, 1822.

DEAR SIR,—An anciently dislocated, and now stiffening wrist, makes writing an operation so slow and painful to me, that I should not so soon have troubled you with an acknowledgment of your favor of the 8th, but for the request it contained of my

consent to the publication of my letter of June the 26th. No, my dear Sir, not for the world. Into what a nest of hornets would it thrust my head! the *genus irritable vatum*, on whom argument is lost, and reason is, by themselves, disclaimed in matters of religion. Don Quixote undertook to redress the bodily wrongs of the world, but the redressment of mental vagaries would be an enterprise more than Quixotic. I should as soon undertake to bring the crazy skulls of Bedlam to sound understanding, as inculcate reason into that of an Athanasian. I am old, and tranquillity is now my *summum bonum*. Keep me, therefore, from the fire and fagots of Calvin and his victim Servetus. Happy in the prospect of a restoration of primitive Christianity, I must leave to younger athletes to encounter and lop off the false branches which have been engrafted into it by the mythologists of the middle and modern ages. I am not aware of the peculiar resistance to Unitarianism, which you ascribe to Pennsylvania. When I lived in Philadelphia, there was a respectable congregation of that sect, with a meeting-house and regular service which I attended, and in which Doctor Priestley officiated to numerous audiences. Baltimore has one or two churches, and their pastor, author of an inestimable book on this subject, was elected chaplain to the late Congress. That doctrine has not yet been preached to us: but the breeze begins to be felt which precedes the storm; and fanaticism is all in a bustle, shutting its doors and

windows to keep it out. But it will come, and drive before it the foggy mists of Platonism which have so long obscured our atmosphere. I am in hopes that some of the disciples of your institution will become missionaries to us, of these doctrines truly evangelical, and open our eyes to what has been so long hidden from them. A bold and eloquent preacher would be nowhere listened to with more freedom than in this State, nor with more firmness of mind. They might need a preparatory discourse on the text of "prove all things, hold fast that which is good," in order to unlearn the lesson that reason is an unlawful guide in religion. They might startle on being first awaked from the dreams of the night, but they would rub their eyes at once, and look the spectres boldly in the face. The preacher might be excluded by our hierophants from their churches and meeting-houses, but would be attended in the fields by whole acres of hearers and thinkers. Missionaries from Cambridge would soon be greeted with more welcome, than from the tritheistical school of Andover. Such are my wishes, such would be my welcomes, warm and cordial as the assurances of my esteem and respect for you.

TO MR. THOMAS SKIDMAN.

MONTICELLO, August 29, 1822.

You must be so good, Sir, as to excuse me from entering into the optical investigation which your

letter of the 18th proposes. The hand of age presses heavily on me. I have long withdrawn my mind from speculations of that kind; my memory is on the wane. I am averse even to close thinking, and writing is become slow, laborious and painful. I will make then but a single suggestion on the subject of your proposition, to show my respect to your request.

To distinct vision it is necessary not only that the visual angle should be sufficient for the powers of the human eye, but that there should be sufficient light also on the object of observation. In microscopic observations, the enlargement of the angle of vision may be more indulged, because auxiliary light may be concentrated on the object by concave mirrors. But in the case of the heavenly bodies, we can have no such aid. The moon, for example, receives from the sun but a fixed quantity of light. In proportion as you magnify her surface, you spread that fixed quantity over a greater space, dilute it more, and render the object more dim. If you increase her magnitude infinitely, you dim her face infinitely also, and she becomes invisible. When under total eclipse, all the direct rays of the sun being intercepted, she is seen but faintly, and would not be seen at all but for the refraction of the solar rays in their passage through our atmosphere. In a night of extreme darkness, a house or a mountain is not seen, as not having light enough to impress the limited sensibility of our eye. I do suppose in fact that

Herschel has availed himself of the properties of the parabolic mirror to the point beyond which its effect would be countervailed by the diminution of light on the object. I barely suggest this element, not presented to view in your letter, as one which must enter into the estimate of the improved telescope you propose. You will receive from the professional mathematicians whom you have consulted, remarks more elaborate and profound, and must be so good as to accept mine merely as testimonies of my respect.

TO GEORGE F. HOPKINS.

MONTICELLO, September 5, 1822.

SIR,—Your letter of August —, was received a few days ago. Of all the departments of science no one seems to have been less advanced for the last hundred years than that of meteorology. The new chemistry indeed has given us a new principle of the generation of rain, by proving water to be a composition of different gases, and has aided our theory of meteoric lights. Electricity stands where Dr. Franklin's early discoveries placed it, except with its new modification of galvanism. But the phenomena of snow, hail, halo, aurora borealis, haze, looming, etc., are as yet very imperfectly understood. I am myself an empiric in natural philosophy, suffering my faith to go no further than my facts. I am pleased, however, to see the efforts of hypothetical specula-

tion, because by the collisions of different hypotheses, truth may be elicited and science advanced in the end. This sceptical disposition does not permit me to say whether your hypothesis for looming and the floating volumes of warm air occasionally perceived, may or may not be confirmed by future observations. More facts are yet wanting to furnish a solution on which we may rest with confidence. I even doubt as yet whether the looming at sea and at land are governed by the same laws. In this state of uncertainty, I cannot presume either to advise or discourage the publication of your essay. This must depend on circumstances of which you must be abler to judge yourself, and therefore I return the paper as requested, with assurances of my great respect.

TO CHILES TERRIL.

MONTICELLO, September 25, 1822.

SIR,—I received on the 20th, your letter of the 13th, on the question, what is an east and west line? which, you say, has been a subject of discussion in the newspapers. I presume, however, it must have been a mere question of definition, and that the parties have differed only in applying the same appellation to different things. The one defines an east and west line to be on a great circle of the earth, passing through the point of departure, its nadir point, and the centre of the earth, its plane rectangular to that of the meridian of departure. The other

considers an east and west line to be a line on the surface of the earth, bounding a plane at right angles with its axis, or a circle of latitude passing through the point of departure, or in other words, a line which, from the point of departure, passes every meridian at a right angle. Each party, therefore, defining the line he means, may be permitted to call it an east and west one, or at least it becomes no longer a mathematical but a philological question of the meaning of the words east and west. The last is what was meant probably by the east and west line in the treaty of Ghent. The same has been the understanding in running the numerous east and west lines which divide our different States. They have been run by observations of latitude at very short intervals, uniting the points of observation by short direct lines, and thus constituting in fact part of a polygon of very short sides.

But, Sir, I do not pretend to be an arbiter of these learned questions; age has weaned me from such speculations, and rendered me as incompetent as unwilling to puzzle myself with them. Your claim on me as a quondam neighbor has induced me to hazard thus much, not indeed for the newspapers, a vehicle to which I am never willingly committed, but to prove my attention to your wishes, and to convey to you the assurances of my respect.

JOHN ADAMS TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

MONTEZILLO, October 15, 1822.

DEAR SIR,—I have long entertained scruples about writing this letter, upon a subject of some delicacy. But old age has overcome them at last.

You remember the four ships ordered by Congress to be built, and the four captains appointed by Washington, Talbot, and Truxton, and Barry, etc., to carry an ambassador to Algiers, and protect our commerce in the Mediterranean. I have always imputed this measure to you, for several reasons. First, because you frequently proposed it to me while we were at Paris, negotiating together for peace with the Barbary powers. Secondly, because I knew that Washington and Hamilton were not only indifferent about a navy, but averse to it. There was no Secretary of the Navy; only four Heads of department. You were Secretary of State; Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury; Knox, Secretary of War; and I believe Bradford was Attorney General. I have always suspected that you and Knox were in favor of a navy. If Bradford was so, the majority was clear. But Washington, I am confident, was against it in his judgment. But his attachment to Knox, and his deference to your opinion, for I know he had a great regard for you, might induce him to decide in favor of you and Knox, even though Bradford united with Hamilton in opposition to you. That Hamilton was averse to the measure, I have

personal evidence; for while it was pending, he came in a hurry and a fit of impatience, to make a visit to me. He said he was likely to be called upon for a large sum of money to build ships of war, to fight the Algerines, and he asked my opinion of the measure. I answered him that I was clearly in favor of it. For I had always been of opinion, from the commencement of the Revolution, that a navy was the most powerful, the safest and the cheapest national defence for this country. My advice, therefore, was, that as much of the revenue as could possibly be spared, should be applied to the building and equipping of ships. The conversation was of some length, but it was manifest in his looks and in his air, that he was disgusted at the measure, as well as at the opinion that I had expressed.

Mrs. Knox not long since wrote a letter to Doctor Waterhouse, requesting him to procure a commission for her son, in the navy; that navy, says her ladyship, of which his father was the parent. "For," says she, "I have frequently heard General Washington say to my husband, the navy was your child." I have always believed it to be Jefferson's child, though Knox may have assisted in ushering it into the world. Hamilton's hobby was the army. That Washington was averse to a navy, I had full proof from his own lips, in many different conversations, some of them of length, in which he always insisted that it was only building and arming ships

for the English. "*Si quid novisti rectius istis candidus imperti; si non, his utere mecum.*"

If I am in error in any particular, pray correct your humble servant.

TO CORNELIUS CAMDEN BLATCHLY.

MONTICELLO, October 21, 1822.

SIR,—I return thanks for the pamphlet you have been so kind as to send me on the subject of commonwealths. Its moral principles merit entire approbation, its philanthropy especially, and its views of the equal rights of man. That, on the principle of a communion of property, small societies may exist in habits of virtue, order, industry, and peace, and consequently in a state of as much happiness as Heaven has been pleased to deal out to imperfect humanity, I can readily conceive, and indeed, have seen its proofs in various small societies which have been constituted on that principle. But I do not feel authorized to conclude from these that an extended society, like that of the United States, or of an individual State, could be governed happily on the same principle. I look to the diffusion of light and education as the resource most to be relied on for ameliorating the condition, promoting the virtue, and advancing the happiness of man. That every man shall be made virtuous, by any process whatever, is, indeed, no more to be expected, than that every tree shall be made to

bear fruit, and every plant nourishment. The brier and bramble can never become the vine and olive; but their asperities may be softened by culture, and their properties improved to usefulness in the order and economy of the world. And I do hope that, in the present spirit of extending to the great mass of mankind the blessings of instruction, I see a prospect of great advancement in the happiness of the human race; and that this may proceed to an indefinite, although not to an infinite degree. Wishing every success to the views of your society which their hopes can promise, and thanking you most particularly for the kind expressions of your letter towards myself, I salute you with assurances of great esteem and respect.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

MONTICELLO, November 1, 1822.

DEAR SIR,—I have racked my memory and ransacked my papers, to enable myself to answer the inquiries of your favor of October the 15th; but to little purpose. My papers furnish me nothing; my memory, generalities only. I know that while I was in Europe, and anxious about the fate of our seafaring men, for some of whom, then in captivity in Algiers, we were treating, and all were in like danger, I formed, undoubtingly, the opinion that our government, as soon as practicable, should provide a naval force sufficient to keep the Bar-

bary States in order; and on this subject we communicated together, as you observe. When I returned to the United States and took part in the administration under General Washington, I constantly maintained that opinion; and in December, 1790, took advantage of a reference to me from the first Congress which met after I was in office, to report in favor of a force sufficient for the protection of our Mediterranean commerce; and I laid before them an accurate statement of the whole Barbary force, public and private. I think General Washington approved of building vessels of war to that extent. General Knox, I know, did. But what was Colonel Hamilton's opinion, I do not in the least remember. Your recollections on that subject are certainly corroborated by his known anxieties for a close connection with Great Britain, to which he might apprehend danger from collisions between their vessels and ours. Randolph was then Attorney General; but his opinion on the question I also entirely forget. Some vessels of war were accordingly built and sent into the Mediterranean. The additions to these in your time, I need not note to you, who are well known to have ever been an advocate for the wooden walls of Themistocles. Some of those you added, were sold under an act of Congress passed while you were in office. I thought, afterwards, that the public safety might require some additional vessels of strength, to be prepared and

in readiness for the first moment of a war, provided they could be preserved against the decay which is unavoidable if kept in the water, and clear of the expense of officers and men. With this view I proposed that they should be built in dry docks, above the level of the tide-waters, and covered with roofs. I further advised, that places for these docks should be selected where there was a command of water on a high level, as that of the Tyber at Washington, by which the vessels might be floated out, on the principle of a lock. But the majority of the legislature was against any addition to the navy, and the minority, although for it in judgment, voted against it on a principle of opposition. We are now, I understand, building vessels to remain on the stocks, under shelter, until wanted, when they will be launched and finished. On my plan they could be in service at an hour's notice. On this, the finishing, after launching, will be a work of time.

This is all I recollect about the origin and progress of our navy. That of the late war, certainly raised our rank and character among nations. Yet a navy is a very expensive engine. It is admitted, that in ten or twelve years a vessel goes to entire decay; or, if kept in repair, costs as much as would build a new one; and that a nation who could count on twelve or fifteen years of peace, would gain by burning its navy and building a new one in time. Its extent, therefore, must be

governed by circumstances. Since my proposition for a force adequate to the piracies of the Mediterranean, a similar necessity has arisen in our own seas for considerable addition to that force. Indeed, I wish we could have a convention with the naval powers of Europe, for them to keep down the pirates of the Mediterranean, and the slave ships on the coast of Africa, and for us to perform the same duties for the society of nations in our seas. In this way, those collisions would be avoided between the vessels of war of different nations, which beget wars and constitute the weightiest objection to navies. I salute you with constant affection and respect.

TO DOCTOR THOMAS COOPER.

MONTICELLO, November 2, 1822.

DEAR SIR,—Your favor of October the 18th came to hand yesterday. The atmosphere of our country is unquestionably charged with a threatening cloud of fanaticism, lighter in some parts, denser in others, but too heavy in all. I had no idea, however, that in Pennsylvania, the cradle of toleration and freedom of religion, it could have arisen to the height you describe. This must be owing to the growth of Presbyterianism. The blasphemy and absurdity of the five points of Calvin, and the impossibility of defending them, render their advocates impatient of reasoning, irritable,

and prone to denunciation. In Boston, however, and its neighborhood, Unitarianism has advanced to so great strength, as now to humble this haughtiest of all religious sects; insomuch, that they condescend to interchange with them and the other sects, the civilities of preaching freely and frequently in each others' meeting-houses. In Rhode Island, on the other hand, no sectarian preacher will permit an Unitarian to pollute his desk. In our Richmond there is much fanaticism, but chiefly among the women. They have their night meetings and praying parties, where, attended by their priests, and sometimes by a henpecked husband, they pour forth the effusions of their love to Jesus, in terms as amatory and carnal, as their modesty would permit them to use to a mere earthly lover. In our village of Charlottesville, there is a good degree of religion, with a small spice only of fanaticism. We have four sects, but without either church or meeting-house. The court-house is the common temple, one Sunday in the month to each. Here, Episcopalian and Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptist, meet together, join in hymning their Maker, listen with attention and devotion to each others' preachers, and all mix in society with perfect harmony. It is not so in the districts where Presbyterianism prevails undividedly. Their ambition and tyranny would tolerate no rival if they had power. Systematical in grasping at an ascendency over all other sects, they aim,

like the Jesuits, at engrossing the education of the country, are hostile to every institution which they do not direct, and jealous at seeing others begin to attend at all to that object. The diffusion of instruction, to which there is now so growing an attention, will be the remote remedy to this fever of fanaticism; while the more proximate one will be the progress of Unitarianism. That this will, ere long, be the religion of the majority from North to South, I have no doubt.

In our university you know there is no Professorship of Divinity. A handle has been made of this, to disseminate an idea that this is an institution, not merely of no religion, but against all religion. Occasion was taken at the last meeting of the Visitors, to bring forward an idea that might silence this calumny, which weighed on the minds of some honest friends to the institution. In our annual report to the legislature, after stating the constitutional reasons against a public establishment of any religious instruction, we suggest the expediency of encouraging the different religious sects to establish, each for itself, a professorship of their own tenets, on the confines of the university, so near as that their students may attend the lectures there, and have the free use of our library, and every other accommodation we can give them; preserving, however, their independence of us and of each other. This fills the chasm objected to ours, as a defect in an institution professing to give

instruction in *all* useful sciences. I think the invitation will be accepted, by some sects from candid intentions, and by others from jealousy and rivalship. And by bringing the sects together, and mixing them with the mass of other students, we shall soften their asperities, liberalize and neutralize their prejudices, and make the general religion a religion of peace, reason, and morality.

The time of opening our university is still as uncertain as ever. All the pavilions, boarding-houses, and dormitories are done. Nothing is now wanting but the central building for a library and other general purposes. For this we have no funds, and the last legislature refused all aid. We have better hopes of the next. But all is uncertain. I have heard with regret of disturbances on the part of the students in your seminary. The article of discipline is the most difficult in American education. Premature ideas of independence, too little repressed by parents, beget a spirit of insubordination, which is the great obstacle to science with us, and a principal cause of its decay since the Revolution. I look to it with dismay in our institution, as a breaker ahead, which I am far from being confident we shall be able to weather. The advance of age, and tardy pace of the public patronage, may probably spare me the pain of witnessing consequences.

I salute you with constant friendship and respect.

TO JOHN CAMPBELL, ESQ.

MONTICELLO, November 10, 1822.

SIR,—I have to acknowledge your favor of the 4th instant, which gives me the first information I had ever received that the laurels which Colonel Campbell so honorably won in the battle of King's Mountain, had ever been brought into question by any one. To him has been ever ascribed so much of the success of that brilliant action as the valor and conduct of an able commander might justly claim. This lessens nothing the merits of his companions in arms, officers and soldiers, who, all and every one, acted well their parts in their respective stations. I have no papers on this subject in my possession, all such received at that day having belonged to the records of the council, but I remember well the deep and grateful impression made on the mind of every one by that memorable victory. It was the joyful annunciation of that turn of the tide of success which terminated the Revolutionary war with the seal of our independence. The slighting expression complained of, as hazarded by the venerable Shelby, might seem inexcusable in a younger man, but he was then old, and I can assure you, dear Sir, from mortifying experience, that the lapses of memory of an old man are innocent subjects of compassion more than of blame. The descendants of Colonel Campbell may rest their heads quietly on the pillow of

his renown. History has consecrated, and will forever preserve it in the faithful annals of a grateful country. With the expressions of the high sense I entertain of his character, accept the assurance to yourself of my great esteem and respect.

P. S. I received at the same time with your letter, one from Mr. William C. Preston, on the same subject. Writing is so slow and painful to me, that I must pray you to make for me my acknowledgments to him, and my request that he will consider this as an answer to his as well as your favor.

TO JAMES SMITH.

MONTICELLO, December 8, 1822.

SIR,—I have to thank you for your pamphlets on the subject of Unitarianism, and to express my gratification with your efforts for the revival of primitive Christianity in your quarter. No historical fact is better established, than that the doctrine of one God, pure and uncompounded, was that of the early ages of Christianity; and was among the efficacious doctrines which gave it triumph over the polytheism of the ancients, sickened with the absurdities of their own theology. Nor was the unity of the Supreme Being ousted from the Christian creed by the force of reason, but by the sword of civil government, wielded at the will of the fanatic Athanasius. The hocus-

pocus phantasm of a God like another Cerberus, with one body and three heads, had its birth and growth in the blood of thousands and thousands of martyrs. And a strong proof of the solidity of the primitive faith, is its restoration, as soon as a nation arises which vindicates to itself the freedom of religious opinion, and its external divorce from the civil authority. The pure and simple unity of the Creator of the universe, is now all but ascendant in the Eastern States; it is dawning in the West, and advancing towards the South; and I confidently expect that the present generation will see Unitarianism become the general religion of the United States. The Eastern presses are giving us many excellent pieces on the subject, and Priestley's learned writings on it are, or should be, in every hand. In fact, the Athanasian paradox that one is three, and three but one, is so incomprehensible to the human mind, that no candid man can say he has any idea of it, and how can he believe what presents no idea? He who thinks he does, only deceives himself. He proves, also, that man, once surrendering his reason, has no remaining guard against absurdities the most monstrous, and like a ship without rudder, is the sport of every wind. With such persons, gullibility, which they call faith, takes the helm from the hand of reason, and the mind becomes a wreck.

I write with freedom, because, while I claim a right to believe in one God, if so my reason tells

me, I yield as freely to others that of believing in three. Both religions, I find, make honest men, and that is the only point society has any right to look to. Although this mutual freedom should produce mutual indulgence, yet I wish not to be brought in question before the public on this or any other subject, and I pray you to consider me as writing under that trust. I take no part in controversies, religious or political. At the age of eighty, tranquillity is the greatest good of life, and the strongest of our desires that of dying in the good will of all mankind. And with the assurance of all my good will to Unitarian and Trinitarian, to Whig and Tory, accept for yourself that of my entire respect.

TO EDWARD EVERETT.

MONTICELLO, February 24, 1823.

DEAR SIR,—I have read with much satisfaction the reply of Mr. Everett, your brother, to the criticisms on his work on the state of Europe, and concur with him generally in the doctrines of the reply. Certainly *provisions* are not allowed, by the consent of nations, to be contraband but where everything is so, as in the case of a blockaded town, with which all intercourse is forbidden. On the question whether the principle of "free bottoms making free goods, and enemy bottoms enemy goods," is now to be considered as established in the law of

nations, I will state to you a fact within my own knowledge, which may lessen the weight of our authority as having acted in the war of France and England on the ancient principle "that the goods of an enemy in the bottom of a friend are lawful prize; while those of a friend in an enemy bottom are not so." England became a party in the general war against France on the 1st of February, 1793. We took immediately the stand of neutrality. We were aware that our great intercourse with these two maritime nations would subject us to harassment by multiplied questions on the duties of neutrality, and that an important and early one would be which of the two principles above stated should be the law of action with us? We wished to act on the new one of "free bottoms free goods;" and we had established it in our treaties with other nations, but not with England. We determined therefore to avoid, if possible, committing ourselves on this question until we could negotiate with England her acquiescence in the new principle. Although the cases occurring were numerous, and the ministers, Genet and Hammond, eagerly on the watch, we were able to avoid any declaration until the massacre of St. Domingo. The whites, on that occasion, took refuge on board our ships, then in their harbor, with all the property they could find room for; and on their passage to the United States, many of them were taken by British cruisers, and their cargoes seized as lawful

prize. The inflammable temper of Genet kindled at once, and he wrote, with his usual passion, a letter reclaiming an observance of the principle of "free bottoms free goods," as if already an acknowledged law of neutrality. I pressed him in conversation not to urge this point; that although it had been acted on by convention, by the armed neutrality, it was not yet become a principle of universal admission; that we wished indeed to strengthen it by our adoption, and were negotiating an acquiescence on the part of Great Britain: but if forced to decide prematurely, we must justify ourselves by a declaration of the ancient principle, and that no general consent of nations had as yet changed it. He was immovable, and on the 25th of July wrote a letter, so insulting, that nothing but a determined system of justice and moderation would have prevented his being shipped home in the first vessel. I had the day before answered his of the 9th, in which I had been obliged in our own justification, to declare that the ancient was the established principle, still existing and authoritative. Our denial, therefore, of the new principle, and action on the old one, were forced upon us by the precipitation and intemperance of Genet, against our wishes, and against our aim; and our involuntary practice, therefore, is of less authority against the new rule.

I owe you particular thanks for the copy of your translation of Buttman's Greek Grammar, which

you have been so kind as to send me. A cursory view of it promises me a rich mine of valuable criticism. I observe he goes with the herd of grammarians in denying an Ablative case to the Greek language. I cannot concur with him in that, but think with the Messrs. of Port Royal who admit an Ablative. And why exclude it? Is it because the Dative and Ablative in Greek are always of the same form? Then there is no Ablative to the Latin plurals, because in them as in Greek, these cases are always in the same form. The Greeks recognized the Ablative under the appellation of the πτωσις αφαιρετικη, which I have met with and noted from some of the scholiasts, without recollecting where. Stephens, Scapula, Hederic acknowledge it as one of the significations of the word αφαιρεματικος. That the Greeks used it cannot be denied. For one of multiplied examples which may be produced take the following from the Hippolytus of Euripides: "απε τῳ τροπῳ δικης Επαισεν αυτον ροπτρον," "dic quo modo justitiæ clava percussit eum," "quo modo" are Ablatives, then why not τω τροπῳ? And translating it into English, should we use the Dative[1] or Ablative preposition? It is not perhaps easy to define very critically what constitutes a case in the declension of nouns. All agree as to the Nominative that it is simply the name of the thing. If

[1] See Buttman's Datives, p. 230, every one of which I should consider as under the accident or relation called Ablative, having no signification of *approach* according to his definition of the Dative.

we admit that a distinct case is constituted by any accident or modification which changes the relation which that bears to the actors or action of the sentence, we must agree to the six cases at least; because, for example, *to* a thing, and *from* a thing are very different accidents to the thing. It may be said that if every distinct accident or change of relation constitutes a different case, then there are in every language as many cases as there are prepositions; for this is the peculiar office of the preposition. But because we do not designate by special names all the cases to which a noun is liable, is that a reason why we should throw away half of those we have, as is done by those grammarians who reject all cases, but the Nominative, Genitive, and Accusative, and in a less degree by those also who reject the Ablative alone? as pushing the discrimination of all the possible cases to extremities leads us to nothing useful or practicable, I am contented with the old six cases, familiar to every cultivated language, ancient and modern, and well understood by all. I acknowledge myself at the same time not an adept in the metaphysical speculations of Grammar. By analyzing too minutely we often reduce our subject to atoms, of which the mind loses its hold. Nor am I a friend to a scrupulous purism of style. I readily sacrifice the niceties of syntax to euphony and strength. It is by boldly neglecting the rigorisms of grammar, that Tacitus has made himself

the strongest writer in the world. The Hyper-esitics call him barbarous; but I should be sorry to exchange his barbarisms for their wise-drawn purisms. Some of his sentences are as strong as language can make them. Had he scrupulously filled up the whole of their syntax, they would have been merely common. To explain my meaning by an English example, I will quote the motto of one, I believe, of the regicides of Charles I., "Rebellion *to* tyrants is obedience to God." Correct its syntax, "Rebellion *against* tyrants is obedience to God," it has lost all the strength and beauty of the antithesis. However, dear Sir, I profess again my want of familiarity with these speculations; I hazard them without confidence, and offer them submissively to your consideration and more practised judgment.

Although writing, with both hands crippled, is slow and painful, and therefore nearly laid aside from necessity, I have been decoyed by my subjects into a very long letter. What would therefore have been a good excuse for ending with the first page, cannot be a bad one for concluding in the fourth, with the assurance of my great esteem and respect.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

MONTICELLO, February 25, 1823.

DEAR SIR,—I received, in due time, your two favors of December the 2d and February the 10th, and have to acknowledge for the ladies of my native State their obligations to you for the enconiums which you are so kind as to bestow on them. They certainly claim no advantages over those of their sister States, and are sensible of more favorable circumstances existing with many of them, and happily availed, which our situation does not offer. But the paper respecting Monticello, to which you allude, was not written by a Virginian, but a visitant from another State; and written by memory at least a dozen years after the visit. This has occasioned some lapses of recollection, and a confusion of some things in the mind of our friend, and particularly as to the volume of slanders supposed to have been cut out of newspapers and preserved. It would not, indeed, have been a single volume, but an encyclopedia in bulk. But I never had such a volume; indeed, I rarely thought those libels worth reading, much less preserving and remembering. At the end of every year, I generally sorted all my pamphlets, and had them bound according to their subjects. One of these volumes consisted of personal altercations between individuals, and calumnies on each other. This was lettered on the back, "Personalities," and is now

in the library of Congress. I was in the habit, also, while living apart from my family, of cutting out of the newspapers such morsels of poetry, or tales, as I thought would please, and of sending them to my grandchildren, who pasted them on leaves of blank paper and formed them into a book. These two volumes have been confounded into one in the recollection of our friend. Her poetical imagination, too, has heightened the scenes she visited, as well as the merits of the inhabitants, to whom her society was a delightful gratification.

I have just finished reading O'Meara's Bonaparte. It places him in a higher scale of understanding than I had allotted him. I had thought him the greatest of all military captains, but an indifferent statesman, and misled by unworthy passions. The flashes, however, which escaped from him in these conversations with O'Meara, prove a mind of great expansion, although not of distinct development and reasoning. He seizes results with rapidity and penetration, but never explains logically the process of reasoning by which he arrives at them. This book, too, makes us forget his atrocities for a moment, in commiseration of his sufferings. I will not say that the authorities of the world, charged with the care of their country and people, had not a right to confine him for life, as a lion or tiger, on the principle of self-preservation. There was no safety to nations while he was permitted to roam at large. But the putting him to death in cold blood, by lingering tortures of mind,

by vexations, insults and deprivations, was a degree of inhumanity to which the poisonings and assassinations of the school of Borgia and the den of Marat never attained. The book proves, also, that nature had denied him the moral sense, the first excellence of well-organized man. If he could seriously and repeatedly affirm that he had raised himself to power without ever having committed a crime, it proves that he wanted totally the sense of right and wrong. If he could consider the millions of human lives which he had destroyed or caused to be destroyed, the desolations of countries by plunderings, burnings, and famine, the destitutions of lawful rulers of the world without the consent of their constituents, to place his brothers and sisters on their thrones, the cutting up of established societies of men and jumbling them discordantly together again at his caprice, the demolition of the fairest hopes of mankind for the recovery of their rights and amelioration of their condition, and all the numberless train of his other enormities; the man, I say, who could consider all these as no crimes, must have been a moral monster, against whom every hand should have been lifted to slay him.

You are so kind as to inquire after my health. The bone of my arm is well knitted, but my hand and fingers are in a discouraging condition, kept entirely useless by an œdematous swelling of slow amendment.

God bless you and continue your good health of body and mind.

TO JUDGE WILLIAM JOHNSON.

MONTICELLO, March 4, 1823.

DEAR SIR,—I delayed some time the acknowledgment of your welcome letter of December 10th, on the common lazy principle of never doing to-day what we can put off to to-morrow, until it became doubtful whether a letter would find you at Charleston. Learning now that you are at Washington, I will reply to some particulars which seem to require it.

The North American Review is a work I do not take, and which is little known in this State, consequently I have never seen its observations on your inestimable history, but a reviewer can never let a work pass uncensured. He must always make himself wiser than his author. He would otherwise think it an abdication of his office of censor On this occasion, he seems to have had more sensibility for Virginia than she has for herself; for, on reading the work, I saw nothing to touch our pride or jealousy, but every expression of respect and good will which truth could justify. The family of enemies, whose buzz you apprehend, are now nothing. You may learn this at Washington; and their military relation has long ago had the full-voiced condemnation of his own State. Do not fear, therefore, these insects. What you write will be far above their grovelling sphere. Let me, then, implore you, dear Sir, to finish your history of parties, leaving the time

of publication to the state of things you may deem proper, but taking especial care that we do not lose it altogether. We have been too careless of our future reputation, while our Tories will omit nothing to place us in the wrong. Besides the five-volumed libel which represents us as struggling for office, and not at all to prevent our government from being administered into a monarchy, the life of Hamilton is in the hands of a man who, to the bitterness of the priest, adds the rancor of the fiercest federalism. Mr. Adams' papers, too, and his biography, will descend of course to his son, whose pen, you know, is pointed, and his prejudices not in our favor. And doubtless other things are in preparation, unknown to us. On our part we are depending on truth to make itself known, while history is taking a contrary set which may become too inveterate for correction. Mr. Madison will probably leave something, but I believe, only particular passages of our history, and these chiefly confined to the period between the dissolution of the old and commencement of the new government, which is peculiarly within his knowledge. After he joined me in the administration, he had no leisure to write. This, too, was my case. But although I had not time to prepare anything express, my letters, (all preserved) will furnish the daily occurrences and views from my return from Europe in 1790, till I retired finally from office. These will command more conviction than anything I could have written after my retirement, no day

having ever passed during that period without a letter to somebody; written too in the moment, and in the warmth and freshness of fact and feeling, they will carry internal evidence that what they breathe is genuine. Selections from these, after my death, may come out successively as the maturity of circumstances may render their appearance seasonable. But multiplied testimony, multiplied views will be necessary to give solid establishment to truth. Much is known to one which is not known to another, and no one knows everything. It is the sum of individual knowledge which is to make up the whole truth, and to give its correct current through future time. Then do not, dear Sir, withhold your stock of information; and I would moreover recommend that you trust it not to a single copy, nor to a single depository. Leave it not in the power of any one person, under the distempered view of an unlucky moment, to deprive us of the weight of your testimony, and to purchase, by its destruction, the favor of any party or person, as happened with a paper of Dr. Franklin's.

I cannot lay down my pen without recurring to one of the subjects of my former letter, for in truth there is no danger I apprehend so much as the consolidation of our government by the noiseless, and therefore unalarming, instrumentality of the Supreme Court. This is the form in which federalism now arrays itself, and consolidation is the present principle of distinction between republicans and the

pseudo-republicans but real federalists. I must comfort myself with the hope that the judges will see the importance and the duty of giving their country the only evidence they can give of fidelity to its Constitution and integrity in the administration of its laws; that is to say, by every one's giving his opinion *seriatim* and publicly on the cases he decides. Let him prove by his reasoning that he has read the papers, that he has considered the case, that in the application of the law to it, he uses his own judgment independently and unbiased by party views and personal favor or disfavor. Throw himself in every case on God and his country; both will excuse him for error and value him for his honesty. The very idea of cooking up opinions in conclave, begets suspicions that something passes which fears the public ear, and this, spreading by degrees, must produce at some time abridgment of tenure, facility of removal, or some other modification which may promise a remedy. For in truth there is at this time more hostility to the federal judiciary, than to any other organ of the government.

I should greatly prefer, as you do, four judges to any greater number. Great lawyers are not overabundant, and the multiplication of judges only enable the weak to outvote the wise, and three concurrent opinions out of four give a strong presumption of right.

I cannot better prove my entire confidence in your candor, than by the frankness with which I commit

myself to you, and to this I add with truth, assurances of the sincerity of my great esteem and respect.

JOHN ADAMS TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

QUINCY, March 10, 1823.

DEAR SIR,—The sight of your well-known handwriting in your favor of 25th February last, gave me great pleasure, as it proved your arm to be restored, and your pen still manageable. May it continue till you shall become as perfect a Calvinist as I am in one particular. Poor Calvin's infirmities, his rheumatism, his gouts and sciatics, made him frequently cry out, *Mon Dieu, jusqu'à quand!* Lord, how long! Prat, once chief justice of New York, always tormented with infirmities, dreamt that he was situated on a single rock in the midst of the Atlantic Ocean. He heard a voice:

> "Why mourns the bard? Apollo bids thee rise,
> Renounce the dust, and claim thy native skies."

The ladies' visit to Monticello has put my readers in requisition to read to me Simons' travels in Switzerland. I thought I had some knowledge of that country before, but I find I had no idea of it. How degenerated are the Swiss. They might defend their country against France, Austria, and Russia; neither of whom ought to be suffered to march armies over their mountains. Those powers have practiced as much tyranny, and immorality, as even the Emperor

Napoleon did over them, or over the royalists of Germany or Italy.

Neither France, Austria, nor Spain, ought to have a foot of land in Italy. All conquerors are alike. Every one of them. *Jura negat sibi lati, nihil non arrogat armis.* We have nothing but fables concerning Theseus, Bacchus, and Hercules, and even Sesostris; but I dare say that every one of them was as tyrannical and immoral as Napoleon. Nebuchadnezzar is the first great conqueror of whom we have anything like history, and he was as great as any of them. Alexander and Cæsar were more immoral than Napoleon. Zingis Khan was as great a conqueror as any of them, and destroyed as many millions of lives, and thought he had a right to the whole globe, if he could subdue it.

What are we to think of the Crusades in which three millions of lives at least were probably sacrificed? And what right had St. Louis and Richard Cœur de Lion to Palestine and Syria more than Alexander to India, or Napoleon to Egypt and Italy? Right and justice have hard fare in this world, but there is a Power above who is capable and willing to put all things right in the end; *et pour mettre chacun à sa place dans l'universe*, and I doubt not He will.

Mr. English, a Bostonian, has published a volume of his expedition with Ishmael Pasha, up the river Nile. He advanced above the third cataract, and opens a prospect of a resurrection from the dead of

those vast and ancient countries of Abyssinia and Ethiopia; a free communication with India, and the river Niger, and the city of Timbuctoo. This, however, is conjecture and speculation rather than certainty; but a free communication by land between Europe and India will ere long be opened. A few American steamboats, and our Quincy stonecutters would soon make the Nile as navigable as our Hudson, Potomac, or Mississippi. You see as my reason and intellect fails, my imagination grows more wild and ungovernable, but my friendship remains the same. Adieu.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

MONTICELLO, April 11, 1823.

DEAR SIR,—The wishes expressed in your last favor, that I may continue in life and health until I become a Calvinist, at least in his exclamation of "*Mon Dieu! jusqu'à quand!*" would make me immortal. I can never join Calvin in addressing *his God*. He was indeed an atheist, which I can never be; or rather his religion was dæmonism. If ever man worshiped a false God, he did. The Being described in his five points, is not the God whom you and I acknowledge and adore, the Creator and benevolent Governor of the world; but a dæmon of malignant spirit. It would be more pardonable to believe in no God at all, than to blaspheme Him by the atrocious attributes of Calvin. Indeed, I think that

every Christian sect gives a great handle to atheism by their general dogma, that, without a revelation, there would not be sufficient proof of the being of a God. Now one-sixth of mankind only are supposed to be Christians; the other five-sixths then, who do not believe in the Jewish and Christian revelation, are without a knowledge of the existence of a God! This gives completely a *gain de cause* to the disciples of Ocellus, Timæus, Spinosa, Diderot and D'Holbach. The argument which they rest on as triumphant and unanswerable is, that in every hypothesis of cosmogony, you must admit an eternal pre-existence of something; and according to the rule of sound philosophy, you are never to employ two principles to solve a difficulty when one will suffice. They say then, that it is more simple to believe at once in the eternal pre-existence of the world, as it is now going on, and may forever go on by the principle of reproduction which we see and witness, than to believe in the eternal pre-existence of an ulterior cause, or Creator of the world, a Being whom we see not and know not, of whose form, substance and mode, or place of existence, or of action, no sense informs us, no power of the mind enables us to delineate or comprehend. On the contrary, I hold, (without appeal to revelation) that when we take a view of the universe, in its parts, general or particular, it is impossible for the human mind not to perceive and feel a conviction of design, consummate skill, and indefinite power in every atom of its composition. The

movements of the heavenly bodies, so exactly held in their course by the balance of centrifugal and centripetal forces; the structure of our earth itself, with its distribution of lands, waters and atmosphere; animal and vegetable bodies, examined in all their minutest particles; insects, mere atoms of life, yet as perfectly organized as man or mammoth; the mineral substances, their generation and uses; it is impossible, I say, for the human mind not to believe, that there is in all this, design, cause and effect, up to an ultimate cause, a Fabricator of all things from matter and motion, their Preserver and Regulator while permitted to exist in their present forms, and their regeneration into new and other forms. We see, too, evident proofs of the necessity of a superintending power, to maintain the universe in its course and order. Stars, well known, have disappeared, new ones have come into view; comets, in their incalculable courses, may run foul of suns and planets, and require renovation under other laws; certain races of animals are become extinct; and were there no restoring power, all existences might extinguish successively, one by one, until all should be reduced to a shapeless chaos. So irresistible are these evidences of an intelligent and powerful Agent, that, of the infinite numbers of men who have existed through all time, they have believed, in the proportion of a million at least to unit, in the hypothesis of an eternal pre-existence of a Creator, rather than in that of a self-existent universe. Surely this unani-

mous sentiment renders this more probable, than that of the few in the other hypothesis. Some early Christians, indeed, have believed in the co-eternal pre-existence of both the Creator and the world, without changing their relation of cause and effect. That this was the opinion of St. Thomas, we are informed by Cardinal Toleta, in these words: "*Deus ab æterno fuit jam omnipotens, sicut cum produxit mundum. Ab æterno potuit producere mundum. Si sol ab æterno esset, lumen ab æterno esset; et si pes, similiter vestigium. At lumen et vestigium effectus sunt efficientis solis et pedis; potuit ergo cum causa æterna effectus co-æterna esse. Cujus sententia est S. Thomas theologorum primus.*"—Cardinal Toleta.

Of the nature of this Being we know nothing. Jesus tells us, that "God is a Spirit." 4 John 24. But without defining what a spirit is: "πνευμα ὁ θεος." Down to the third century, we know it was still deemed material; but of a lighter, subtler matter than our gross bodies. So says Origen, "*Deus igitur, cui anima similis est, juxta originem, reapte corporalis est; sed graviorum tantum ratione corporum incorporeus.*" These are the words of Huet in his commentary on Origen. Origen himself says, "*appellatio* ασωματον *apud nostros scriptores est inusitata et incognita.*" So also Tertullian; "*quis autem negabit deum esse corpus etsi deus spiritus? Spiritus etiam corporis sui generis, in sua effigie.*"—Tertullian. These two fathers were of the third century. Calvin's character of this Supreme Being seems chiefly

copied from that of the Jews. But the reformation of these blasphemous attributes, and substitution of those more worthy, pure, and sublime, seems to have been the chief object of Jesus in His discourses to the Jews; and His doctrine of the cosmogony of the world is very clearly laid down in the three first verses of the first chapter of John, in these words: "Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν, καὶ Θεος ἦν ὁ λόγος. Οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν Θεόν. Πάντα δἰ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο· καὶ κωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἕν, ὅ γέγονεν." Which truly translated means, "In the beginning God existed, and reason [or mind] was with God, and that mind was God. This was in the beginning with God. All things were created by it, and without it was made not one thing which was made." Yet this text, so plainly declaring the doctrine of Jesus, that the world was created by the Supreme, Intelligent Being, has been perverted by modern Christians to build up a second person of their tritheism, by a mistranslation of the word λογος. One of its legitimate meanings, indeed, is "a word." But in that sense it makes an unmeaning jargon; while the other meaning, "reason," equally legitimate, explains rationally the eternal pre-existence of God, and His creation of the world. Knowing how incomprehensible it was that "a word," the mere action or articulation of the organs of speech could create a world, they undertook to make of this articulation a second pre-existing being, and ascribe to him, and not to God, the creation of the universe. The atheist here plumes himself on the uselessness

of such a God, and the simpler hypothesis of a self-existent universe. The truth is, that the greatest enemies to the doctrines of Jesus are those, calling themselves the expositors of them, who have perverted them for the structure of a system of fancy absolutely incomprehensible, and without any foundation in His genuine words. And the day will come, when the mystical generation of Jesus, by the Supreme Being as His Father, in the womb of a virgin, will be classed with the fable of the generation of Minerva in the brain of Jupiter. But we may hope that the dawn of reason, and freedom of thought in these United States, will do away all this artificial scaffolding, and restore to us the primitive and genuine doctrines of this the most venerated Reformer of human errors.

So much for your quotation of Calvin's "*Mon Dieu! jusqu'à quand!*" in which, when addressed to the God of Jesus, and our God, I join you cordially, and await His time and will with more readiness than reluctance. May we meet there again, in Congress, with our ancient colleagues, and receive with them the seal of approbation, "well done, good and faithful servants."

TO GENERAL SAMUEL SMITH.

MONTICELLO, May 3, 1823.

DEAR GENERAL,—I duly received your favor of the 24th ultimo. But I am rendered a slow corre-

spondent by the loss of the use, totally of the one, and almost totally of the other wrist, which renders writing scarcely and painfully practicable. I learn with great satisfaction that wholesome economies have been found, sufficient to relieve us from the ruinous necessity of adding annually to our debt by new loans. The deviser of so salutary a relief deserves truly well of his country. I shall be glad, too, if an additional tax of one-fourth of a dollar a gallon on whiskey shall enable us to meet all our engagements with punctuality. Viewing that tax as an article in a system of excise, I was once glad to see it fall with the rest of the system, which I considered as prematurely and unnecessarily introduced. It was evident that our existing taxes were *then* equal to our existing debts. It was clearly foreseen also that the surplus from excise would only become aliment for useless offices, and would be swallowed in idleness by those whom it would withdraw from useful industry. Considering it only as a fiscal measure, this was right. But the prostration of body and mind which the cheapness of this liquor is spreading through the mass of our citizens, now calls the attention of the legislator on a very different principle. One of his important duties is as guardian of those who from causes susceptible of precise definition, cannot take care of themselves. Such are infants, maniacs, gamblers, drunkards. The last, as much as the maniac, requires restrictive measures to save him from the fatal infatuation under which he is

destroying his health, his morals, his family, and his usefulness to society. One powerful obstacle to his ruinous self-indulgence would be a price beyond his competence. As a sanatory measure, therefore, it becomes one of duty in the public guardians. Yet I do not think it follows necessarily that imported spirits should be subjected to similar enhancement, until they become as cheap as those made at home. A tax on whiskey is to discourage its consumption; a tax on foreign spirits encourages whiskey by removing its rival from competition. The price and present duty throw foreign spirits already out of competition with whiskey, and accordingly they are used but to a salutary extent. You see no persons besotting themselves with imported spirits, wines, liquors, cordials, etc. Whiskey claims to itself alone the exclusive office of sot-making. Foreign spirits, wines, teas, coffee, segars, salt, are articles of as innocent consumption as broadcloths and silks; and ought, like them, to pay but the average *ad valorem* duty of other imported comforts. All of them are ingredients in our happiness, and the government which steps out of the ranks of the ordinary articles of consumption to select and lay under disproportionate burdens a particular one, because it is a comfort, pleasing to the taste, or necessary to health, and will therefore be bought, is, in that particular, a tyranny. Taxes on consumption like those on capital or income, to be just, must be uniform. I do not mean to say that it may not be for the general in-

terest to foster for awhile certain infant manufactures, until they are strong enough to stand against foreign rivals; but when evident that they will never be so, it is against right, to make the other branches of industry support them. When it was found that France could not make sugar under 6 h. a lb., was it not tyranny to restrain her citizens from importing at 1 h.? or would it not have been so to have laid a duty of 5 h. on the imported? The permitting an exchange of industries with other nations is a direct encouragement of your own, which without that, would bring you nothing for your comfort, and would of course cease to be produced.

On the question of the next Presidential election, I am a mere looker-on. I never permit myself to express an opinon, or to feel a wish on the subject. I indulge a single hope only, that the choice may fall on one who will be a friend of peace, of economy, of the republican principles of our Constitution, and of the salutary distribution of powers made by that between the general and the local governments; to this, I ever add sincere prayers for your happiness and prosperity.

TO MICHAEL MEGEAR.

MONTICELLO, May 29, 1823.

I thank you, Sir, for the copy of the letters of Paul and Amicus, which you have been so kind as to send me, and shall learn from them with satisfaction

the peculiar tenets of the Friends, and particularly their opinions on the incomprehensibilities (otherwise called the mysteries) of the Trinity. I think with them on many points, and especially on missionary and Bible societies. While we have so many around us, within the same social pale, who need instruction and assistance, why carry to a distance, and to strangers what our own neighbors need? It is a duty certainly to give our sparings to those who want; but to see also that they are faithfully distributed, and duly apportioned to the respective wants of those receivers. And why give through agents whom we know not, to persons whom we know not, and in countries from which we get no account, when we can do it at short hand, to objects under our eye, through agents we know, and to supply wants we see? I do not know that it is a duty to disturb by missionaries the religion and peace of other countries, who may think themselves bound to extinguish by fire and fagot the heresies to which we give the name of conversions, and quote our own example for it. Were the Pope, or his holy allies, to send in mission to us some thousands of Jesuit priests to convert us to their orthodoxy, I suspect that we should deem and treat it as a national aggression on our peace and faith. I salute you in the spirit of peace and good will.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (JAMES MONROE).

MONTICELLO, June 11, 1823.

DEAR SIR,—Considering that I had not been to Bedford for a twelvemonth before, I thought myself singularly unfortunate in so timing my journey, as to have been absent exactly at the moment of your late visit to our neighborhood. The loss, indeed, was all my own; for in these short interviews with you, I generally get my political compass rectified, learn from you whereabouts we are, and correct my course again. In exchange for this, I can give you but newspaper ideas, and little indeed of these, for I read but a single paper, and that hastily. I find Horace and Tacitus so much better writers than the champions of the gazettes, that I lay those down to take up these with great reluctance. And on the question you propose, whether we can, in any form, take a bolder attitude than formerly in favor of liberty, I can give you but commonplace ideas. They will be but the widow's mite, and offered only because requested. The matter which now embroils Europe, the presumption of dictating to an independent nation the form of its government, is so arrogant, so atrocious, that indignation, as well as moral sentiment, enlists all our partialities and prayers in favor of one, and our equal execrations against the other. I do not know, indeed, whether all nations do not owe to one another a bold and open

declaration of their sympathies with the one party, and their detestation of the conduct of the other. But farther than this we are not bound to go; and indeed, for the sake of the world, we ought not to increase the jealousies, or draw on ourselves the power of this formidable confederacy. I have ever deemed it fundamental for the United States, never to take active part in the quarrels of Europe. Their political interests are entirely distinct from ours. Their mutual jealousies, their balance of power, their complicated alliances, their forms and principles of government, are all foreign to us. They are nations of eternal war. All their energies are expended in the destruction of the labor, property and lives of their people. On our part, never had a people so favorable a chance of trying the opposite system, of peace and fraternity with mankind, and the direction of all our means and faculties to the purposes of improvement instead of destruction. With Europe we have few occasions of collision, and these, with a little prudence and forbearance, may be generally accommodated. Of the brethren of our own hemisphere, none are yet, or for an age to come will be, in a shape, condition, or disposition to war against us. And the foothold which the nations of Europe had in either America, is slipping from under them, so that we shall soon be rid of their neighborhood. Cuba alone seems at present to hold up a speck of war to us. Its possession by Great Britain would indeed be a great calamity to us. Could we induce

her to join us in guaranteeing its independence against all the world, *except* Spain, it would be nearly as valuable to us as if it were our own. But should she take it, I would not immediately go to war for it; because the first war on other accounts will give it to us; or the island will give itself to us, when able to do so. While no duty, therefore, calls on us to take part in the present war of Europe, and a golden harvest offers itself in reward for doing nothing, peace and neutrality seem to be our duty and interest. We may gratify ourselves, indeed, with a neutrality as partial to Spain as would be justifiable without giving cause of war to her adversary; we might and ought to avail ourselves of the happy occasion of procuring and cementing a cordial reconciliation with her, by giving assurance of every friendly office which neutrality admits, and especially, against all apprehension of our intermeddling in the quarrel with her colonies. And I expect daily and confidently to hear of a spark kindled in France, which will employ her at home, and relieve Spain from all further apprehensions of danger.

That England is playing false with Spain cannot be doubted. Her government is looking one way and rowing another. It is curious to look back a little on past events. During the ascendency of Bonaparte, the word among the herd of kings, was "*sauve qui peut.*" Each shifted for himself, and left his brethren to squander and do the same as they could. After the battle of Waterloo, and the mili-

tary possession of France, they rallied and combined in common cause, to maintain each other against any similar and future danger. And in this alliance, Louis, now avowedly, and George, secretly but solidly, were of the contracting parties; and there can be no doubt that the allies are bound by treaty to aid England with their armies, should insurrection take place among her people. The coquetry she is now playing off between her people and her allies is perfectly understood by the latter, and accordingly gives no apprehensions to France, to whom it is all explained. The diplomatic correspondence she is now displaying, these double papers, fabricated merely for exhibition, in which she makes herself talk of morals and principle, as if her qualms of conscience would not permit her to go all lengths with her Holy Allies, are all to gull her own people. It is a theatrical farce, in which the five powers are the actors, England the Tartuffe, and her people the dupes. Playing thus so dextrously into each others' hands, and their own persons seeming secured, they are now looking to their privileged orders. These faithful auxiliaries, or accomplices, must be saved. This war is evidently that of the general body of the aristocracy, in which England is also acting her part. "Save but the nobles and there shall be no war," says she, masking her measures at the same time under the form of friendship and mediation, and hypocritically, while a party, offering herself as a judge, to betray those whom she is not permitted

openly to oppose. A fraudulent neutrality, if neutrality at all, is all Spain will get from her. And Spain, probably, perceives this, and willingly winks at it rather than have her weight thrown openly into the other scale.

But I am going beyond my text, and sinning against the adage of carrying coals to Newcastle. In hazarding to you my crude and uninformed notions of things beyond my cognizance, only be so good as to remember that it is at your request, and with as little confidence on my part as profit on yours. You will do what is right, leaving the people of Europe to act their follies and crimes among themselves, while we pursue in good faith the paths of peace and prosperity. To your judgment we are willingly resigned, with sincere assurances of affectionate esteem and respect.

TO JUDGE WILLIAM JOHNSON.

MONTICELLO, June 12, 1823.

DEAR SIR,—Our correspondence is of that accommodating character, which admits of suspension at the convenience of either party, without inconvenience to the other. Hence this tardy acknowledgment of your favor of April the 11th. I learn from that with great pleasure, that you have resolved on continuing your history of parties. Our opponents are far ahead of us in preparations for placing their cause favorably before posterity.

Yet I hope even from some of them the escape of precious truths, in angry explosions or effusions of vanity, which will betray the genuine monarchism of their principles. They do not themselves believe what they endeavor to inculcate, that we were an opposition party, not on principle, but merely seeking for office. The fact is, that at the formation of our government, many had formed their political opinions on European writings and practices, believing the experience of old countries, and especially of England, abusive as it was, to be a safer guide than mere theory. The doctrines of Europe were, that men in numerous associations cannot be restrained within the limits of order and justice, but by forces physical and moral, wielded over them by authorities independent of their will. Hence their organization of kings, hereditary nobles, and priests. Still further to constrain the brute force of the people, they deem it necessary to keep them down by hard labor, poverty and ignorance, and to take from them, as from bees, so much of their earnings, as that unremitting labor shall be necessary to obtain a sufficient surplus barely to sustain a scanty and miserable life. And these earnings they apply to maintain their privileged orders in splendor and idleness, to fascinate the eyes of the people, and excite in them an humble adoration and submission, as to an order of superior beings. Although few among us had gone all these lengths of opinion, yet many

had advanced, some more, some less, on the way. And in the convention which formed our government, they endeavored to draw the cords of power as tight as they could obtain them, to lessen the dependence of the general functionaries on their constituents, to subject to them those of the States, and to weaken their means of maintaining the steady equilibrium which the majority of the convention had deemed salutary for both branches, general and local. To recover, therefore, in practice the powers which the nation had refused, and to warp to their own wishes those actually given, was the steady object of the federal party. Ours, on the contrary, was to maintain the will of the majority of the convention, and of the people themselves. We believed, with them, that man was a rational animal, endowed by nature with rights, and with an innate sense of justice; and that he could be restrained from wrong and protected in right, by moderate powers, confided to persons of his own choice, and held to their duties by dependence on his own will. We believed that the complicated organization of kings, nobles, and priests, was not the wisest nor best to effect the happiness of associated man; that wisdom and virtue were not hereditary; that the trappings of such a machinery, consumed by their expense, those earnings of industry, they were meant to protect, and, by the inequalities they produced, exposed liberty to sufferance. We believed that men, enjoying in

ease and security the full fruits of their own industry, enlisted by all their interests on the side of law and order, habituated to think for themselves, and to follow their reason as their guide, would be more easily and safely governed, than with minds nourished in error, and vitiated and debased, as in Europe, by ignorance, indigence and oppression. The cherishment of the people then was our principle, the fear and distrust of them, that of the other party. Composed, as we were, of the landed and laboring interests of the country, we could not be less anxious for a government of law and order than were the inhabitants of the cities, the strongholds of federalism. And whether our efforts to save the principles and form of our Constitution have not been salutary, let the present republican freedom, order and prosperity of our country determine. History may distort truth, and will distort it for a time, by the superior efforts at justification of those who are conscious of needing it most. Nor will the opening scenes of our present government be seen in their true aspect, until the letters of the day, now held in private hoards, shall be broken up and laid open to public view. What a treasure will be found in General Washington's cabinet, when it shall pass into the hands of as candid a friend to truth as he was himself! When no longer, like Cæsar's notes and memorandums in the hands of Antony, it shall be open to the high priests of federalism only, and garbled to say so much, and no more, as suits their views!

With respect to his farewell address, to the authorship of which, it seems, there are conflicting claims, I can state to you some facts. He had determined to decline a re-election at the end of his first term, and so far determined, that he had requested Mr. Madison to prepare for him something valedictory, to be addressed to his constituents on his retirement. This was done, but he was finally persuaded to acquiesce in a second election, to which no one more strenuously pressed him than myself, from a conviction of the importance of strengthening, by longer habit, the respect necessary for that office, which the weight of his character only could effect. When, at the end of this second term, his Valedictory came out, Mr. Madison recognized in it several passages of his draught; several others, we were both satisfied, were from the pen of Hamilton, and others from that of the President himself. These he probably put into the hands of Hamilton to form into a whole, and hence it may all appear in Hamilton's handwriting, as if it were all of his composition.

I have stated above, that the original objects of the federalists were, 1st, to warp our government more to the form and principles of monarchy, and, 2d, to weaken the barriers of the State governments as coördinate powers. In the first they have been so completely foiled by the universal spirit of the nation, that they have abandoned the enterprise, shrunk from the odium of their old

appellation, taken to themselves a participation of ours, and under the pseudo-republican mask, are now aiming at their second object, and strengthened by unsuspecting or apostate recruits from our ranks, are advancing fast towards an ascendency. I have been blamed for saying, that a prevalence of the doctrines of consolidation would one day call for reformation or *revolution*. I answer by asking if a single State of the Union would have agreed to the Constitution, had it given all powers to the General Government? If the whole opposition to it did not proceed from the jealousy and fear of every State, of being subjected to the other States in matters merely its own? And if there is any reason to believe the States more disposed now than then, to acquiesce in this general surrender of all their rights and powers to a consolidated government, one and undivided?

You request me confidentially, to examine the question, whether the Supreme Court has advanced beyond its constitutional limits, and trespassed on those of the State authorities? I do not undertake it, my dear Sir, because I am unable. Age and the wane of mind consequent on it, have disqualified me from investigations so severe, and researches so laborious. And it is the less necessary in this case, as having been already done by others with a logic and learning to which I could add nothing. On the decision of the case of Cohens *vs.* The State of Virginia, in the Supreme Court of

the United States, in March, 1821, Judge Roane, under the signature of Algernon Sidney, wrote for the Enquirer a series of papers on the law of that case. I considered these papers maturely as they came out, and confess that they appeared to me to pulverize every word which had been delivered by Judge Marshall, of the extra-judicial part of his opinion; and all was extra-judicial, except the decision that the act of Congress had not purported to give to the corporation of Washington the authority claimed by their lottery law, of controlling the laws of the States within the States themselves. But unable to claim that case, he could not let it go entirely, but went on gratuitously to prove, that notwithstanding the eleventh amendment of the Constitution, a State *could* be brought as a defendant, to the bar of his court; and again, that Congress might authorize a corporation of its territory to exercise legislation within a State, and paramount to the laws of that State. I cite the sum and result only of his doctrines, according to the impression made on my mind at the time, and still remaining. If not strictly accurate in circumstance, it is so in substance. This doctrine was so completely refuted by Roane, that if he can be answered, I surrender human reason as a vain and useless faculty, given to bewilder, and not to guide us. And I mention this particular case as one only of several, because it gave occasion to that thorough examination of

the constitutional limits between the General and State jurisdictions, which you have asked for. There were two other writers in the same paper, under the signatures of Fletcher of Saltoun, and Somers, who, in a few essays, presented some very luminous and striking views of the question. And there was a particular paper which recapitulated all the cases in which it was thought the federal court had usurped on the State jurisdictions. These essays will be found in the Enquirers of 1821, from May the 10th to July the 13th. It is not in my present power to send them to you, but if Ritchie can furnish them, I will procure and forward them. If they had been read in the other States, as they were here, I think they would have left, there as here, no dissentients from their doctrine. The subject was taken up by our legislature of 1821–'22, and two draughts of remonstrances were prepared and discussed. As well as I remember, there was no difference of opinion as to the matter of right; but there was as to the expediency of a remonstrance at that time, the general mind of the States being then under extraordinary excitement by the Missouri question; and it was dropped on that consideration. But this case is not dead, it only sleepeth. The Indian chief said he did not go to war for every petty injury by itself, but put it into his pouch, and when that was full, he then made war. Thank Heaven, we have provided a more peaceable and rational mode of redress.

This practice of Judge Marshall, of travelling out of his case to prescribe what the law would be in a moot case not before the court, is very irregular and very censurable. I recollect another instance, and the more particularly, perhaps, because it in some measure bore on myself. Among the midnight appointments of Mr. Adams, were commissions to some federal justices of the peace for Alexandria. These were signed and sealed by him, but not delivered. I found them on the table of the Department of State, on my entrance into office, and I forbade their delivery. Marbury, named in one of them, applied to the Supreme Court for a mandamus to the Secretary of State, (Mr. Madison) to deliver the commission intended for him. The Court determined at once, that being an original process, they had no cognizance of it; and therefore the question before them was ended. But the Chief Justice went on to lay down what the law would be, had they jurisdiction of the case, to wit: that they should command the delivery. The object was clearly to instruct any other court having the jurisdiction, what they should do if Marbury should apply to them. Besides the impropriety of this gratuitous interference, could anything exceed the perversion of law? For if there is any principle of law never yet contradicted, it is that delivery is one of the essentials to the validity of a deed. Although signed and sealed, yet as long as it remains in the hands of the

party himself, it is *in fieri* only, it is not a deed, and can be made so only by its delivery. In the hands of a third person it may be made an escrow. But whatever is in the executive offices is certainly deemed to be in the hands of the President; and in this case, was actually in my hands, because, when I countermanded them, there was as yet no Secretary of State. Yet this case of Marbury and Madison is continually cited by bench and bar, as if it were settled law, without any animadversion on its being merely an *obiter* dissertation of the Chief Justice.

It may be impracticable to lay down any general formula of words which shall decide at once, and with precision, in every case, this limit of jurisdiction. But there are two canons which will guide us safely in most of the cases. 1st. The capital and leading object of the Constitution was to leave with the States all authorities which respected their own citizens only, and to transfer to the United States those which respected citizens of foreign or other States: to make us several as to ourselves, but one as to all others. In the latter case, then, constructions should lean to the general jurisdiction, if the words will bear it; and in favor of the States in the former, if possible to be so construed. And indeed, between citizens and citizens of the same State, and under their own laws, I know but a single case in which a jurisdiction is given to the General Government. That

is, where anything but gold or silver is made a lawful tender, or the obligation of contracts is any otherwise impaired. The separate legislatures had so often abused that power, that the citizens themselves chose to trust it to the general, rather than to their own special authorities. 2d. On every question of construction, carry ourselves back to the time when the Constitution was adopted, recollect the spirit manifested in the debates, and instead of trying what meaning may be squeezed out of the text, or invented against it, conform to the probable one in which it was passed. Let us try Cohen's case by these canons only, referring always, however, for full argument, to the essays before cited.

1. It was between a citizen and his own State, and under a law of his State. It was a domestic case, therefore, and not a foreign one.

2. Can it be believed, that under the jealousies prevailing against the General Government, at the adoption of the Constitution, the States meant to surrender the authority of preserving order, of enforcing moral duties and restraining vice, within their own territory? And this is the present case, that of Cohen being under the ancient and general law of gaming. Can any good be effected by taking from the States the moral rule of their citizens, and subordinating it to the general authority, or to one of their corporations, which may justify forcing the meaning of words, hunting after possible

constructions, and hanging inference on inference, from heaven to earth, like Jacob's ladder? Such an intention was impossible, and such a licentiousness of construction and inference, if exercised by both governments, as may be done with equal right, would equally authorize both to claim all power, general and particular, and break up the foundations of the Union. Laws are made for men of ordinary understanding, and should, therefore, be construed by the ordinary rules of common sense. Their meaning is not to be sought for in metaphysical subtleties, which may make anything mean everything or nothing, at pleasure. It should be left to the sophisms of advocates, whose trade it is, to prove that a defendant is a plaintiff, though dragged into court, *torto collo*, like Bonaparte's volunteers, into the field in chains, or that a power has been given, because it ought to have been given, *et alia talia*. The States supposed that by their tenth amendment, they had secured themselves against constructive powers. They were not lessoned yet by Cohen's case, nor aware of the slipperiness of the eels of the law. I ask for no straining of words against the General Government, nor yet against the States. I believe the States can best govern our home concerns, and the General Government our foreign ones. I wish, therefore, to see maintained that wholesome distribution of powers established by the Constitution for the limitation of both; and never to see all

offices transferred to Washington, where, further withdrawn from the eyes of the people, they may more secretly be bought and sold as at market.

But the Chief Justice says, "there must be an ultimate arbiter somewhere." True, there must; but does that prove it is either party? The ultimate arbiter is the people of the Union, assembled by their deputies in convention, at the call of Congress, or of two-thirds of the States. Let them decide to which they mean to give an authority claimed by two of their organs. And it has been the peculiar wisdom and felicity of our Constitution, to have provided this peaceable appeal, where that of other nations is at once to force.

I rejoice in the example you set of *seriatim* opinions. I have heard it often noticed, and always with high approbation. Some of your brethren will be encouraged to follow it occasionally, and in time, it may be felt by all as a duty, and the sound practice of the primitive court be again restored. Why should not every judge be asked his opinion, and give it from the bench, if only by yea or nay? Besides ascertaining the fact of his opinion, which the public have a right to know, in order to judge whether it is impeachable or not, it would show whether the opinions were unanimous or not, and thus settle more exactly the weight of their authority.

The close of my second sheet warns me that it is time now to relieve you from this letter of unmerciful length. Indeed, I wonder how I have accom-

plished it, with two crippled wrists, the one scarcely able to move my pen, the other to hold my paper. But I am hurried sometimes beyond the sense of pain, when unbosoming myself to friends who harmonize with me in principle. You and I may differ occasionally in details of minor consequence, as no two minds, more than two faces, are the same in every feature. But our general objects are the same; to preserve the republican form and principles of our Constitution, and cleave to the salutary distribution of powers which that has established. These are the two sheet anchors of our Union. If driven from either, we shall be in danger of foundering. To my prayers for its safety and perpetuity, I add those for the continuation of your health, happiness, and usefulness to your country.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (JAMES MONROE).

MONTICELLO, June 23, 1823.

DEAR SIR,—I have been lately visited by a Mr. Miralla, a native of Buenos Ayres, but resident in Cuba for the last seven or eight years; a person of intelligence, of much information, and frankly communicative. I believe, indeed, he is known to you. I availed myself of the opportunity of learning what was the state of public sentiment in Cuba as to their future course. He says they would be satisfied to remain as they are; but all are sen-

sible that that cannot be; that whenever circumstances shall render a separation from Spain necessary, a perfect independence would be their choice, provided they could see a certainty of protection; but that, without that prospect, they would be divided in opinion between an incorporation with Mexico, and with the United States.—Colombia being too remote for prompt support. The considerations in favor of Mexico are that the Havana would be the emporium for all the produce of that immense and wealthy country, and of course, the medium of all its commerce; that having no ports on its eastern coast, Cuba would become the depot of its naval stores and strength, and, in effect, would, in a great measure, have the sinews of the government in its hands. That in favor of the United States is the fact that three-fourths of the exportations from Havana come to the United States, that they are a settled government, the power which can most promptly succor them, rising to an eminence promising future security; and of which they would make a member of the sovereignty, while as to England, they would be only a colony, subordinated to her interest, and that there is not a man in the island who would not resist her to the bitterest extremity. Of this last sentiment I had not the least idea at the date of my late letters to you. I had supposed an English interest there quite as strong as that of the United States, and therefore, that, to avoid war, and keep

the island open to our own commerce, it would be best to join that power in mutually guaranteeing its independence. But if there is no danger of its falling into the possession of England, I must retract an opinion founded on an error of fact. We are surely under no obligation to give her, gratis, an interest which she has not; and the whole inhabitants being averse to her, and the climate mortal to strangers, its continued military occupation by her would be impracticable. It is better then to lie still in readiness to receive that interesting incorporation when solicited by herself. For, certainly, her addition to our confederacy is exactly what is wanting to round our power as a nation to the point of its utmost interest.

I have thought it my duty to acknowledge my error on this occasion, and to repeat a truth before acknowledged, that, retired as I am, I know too little of the affairs of the world to form opinions of them worthy of any attention; and I resign myself with reason, and perfect confidence to the care and guidance of those to whom the helm is committed. With this assurance, accept that of my constant and affectionate friendship and respect.

TO GEORGE TICKNOR.

MONTICELLO, July 16, 1823.

DEAR SIR,—I received in due time your favor of June 16th, and with it your syllabus of lectures on

Spanish literature. I have considered this with great interest and satisfaction, as it gives me a model of course I wish to see pursued in the different branches of instruction in our University; *i. e.*, a methodical, critical, and profound explanation by way of protection of every science we propose to teach. I am not fully informed of the practices at Harvard, but there is one from which we shall certainly vary, although it has been copied, I believe, by nearly every college and academy in the United States. That is, the holding the students all to one prescribed course of reading, and disallowing exclusive application to those branches only which are to qualify them for the particular vocations to which they are destined. We shall, on the contrary, allow them uncontrolled choice in the lectures they shall choose to attend, and require elementary qualification only, and sufficient age. Our institution will proceed on the principle of doing all the good it can without consulting its own pride or ambition; of letting every one come and listen to whatever he thinks may improve the condition of his mind. The rock which I most dread is the discipline of the institution, and it is that on which most of our public schools labor. The insubordination of our youth is now the greatest obstacle to their education. We may lessen the difficulty, perhaps, by avoiding too much government, by requiring no useless observances, none which shall merely multiply occasions for dissatis-

faction, disobedience and revolt by referring to the more discreet of themselves the minor discipline, the graver to the civil magistrates, as in Edinburgh. On this head I am anxious for information of the practices of other places, having myself had little experience of the government of youth. I presume there are printed codes of the rules of Harvard, and if so, you would oblige me by sending me a copy, and of those of any other academy which you think can furnish anything useful. You flatter me with a visit "as soon as you learn that the University is fairly opened." A visit from you at any time will be the most welcome possible to all our family, who remember with peculiar satisfaction the pleasure they received from your former one. But were I allowed to name the time, it should not be deferred beyond the autumn of the ensuing year. Our last building, and that which will be the principal ornament and keystone, giving unity to the whole, will then be nearly finished, and afford you a gratification compensating the trouble of the journey. We shall then, also, be engaged in our code of regulations preparatory to our opening, which may, perhaps, take place in the beginning of 1825. There is no person from whose information of the European institutions, and especially their discipline, I should expect so much aid in that difficult work. Come, then, dear Sir, at that, or any earlier epoch, and give to our institution the benefit of your counsel. I know that you

scout, as I do, the idea of any rivalship. Our views are catholic for the improvement of our country by science, and indeed, it is better even for your own University to have its yokemate at this distance, rather than to force a nearer one from the increasing necessity for it. And how long before we may expect others in the southern, western, and middle region of this vast country?

I send you by mail a print of the ground-plan of our institution; it may give you some idea of its distribution and conveniences, but not of its architecture, which being chastely classical, constitutes one of its distinguishing characters. I am much indebted for your kind attentions to Mr. Harrison; he is a youth of promise. I could not deny myself the gratification of communicating to his father the part of your letter respecting him.

Our family all join me in assurances of our friendly esteem and great respect.

JOHN ADAMS TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

QUINCY, August 15, 1823.

Watchman, what of the night? Is darkness that may be felt, to prevail over the whole world? or can you perceive any rays of a returning dawn? Is the devil to be the "Lord's anointed" over the whole globe? or do you foresee the fulfilment of the prophecies according to Dr. Priestley's interpretation of them? I know not, but I have in some

of my familiar, and frivolous letters to you, told the story four times over; but if I have, I never applied it so well as now.

Not long after the denouement of the tragedy of Louis XVI, when I was Vice-President, my friend the Doctor came to breakfast with me alone; he was very sociable, very learned and eloquent, on the subject of the French Revolution. It was opening a new era in the world, and presenting a near view of the millennium. I listened; I heard with great attention and perfect *sang froid.* At last I asked the Doctor: "Do you really believe the French will establish a free democratical government in France?" He answered: "I do firmly believe it." "Will you give me leave to ask you upon what grounds you entertain this opinion? Is it from anything you ever read in history? Is there any instance of a Roman Catholic monarchy of five and twenty millions at once converted into a free and national people?" "No; I know of no instance like it." "Is there anything in your knowledge of human nature, derived from books, or experience, that any nation, ancient or modern, consisting of such multitudes of ignorant people, ever were, or ever can be converted suddenly into materials capable of conducting a free government, especially a democratical republic?" "No—I know nothing of the kind." "Well then, Sir, what is the ground of your opinion?" The answer was: "My opinion is founded altogether upon revelation, and the proph-

ecies. I take it that the ten horns of the great beast in Revelations, mean the ten crowned heads of Europe; and that the execution of the King of France, is the falling off of the first of those horns; and the nine monarchies of Europe will fall one after another in the same way." Such was the enthusiasm of that great man, that reasoning machine. After all, however, he did recollect himself so far as to say: "There is, however, a possibility of doubt; for I read yesterday a book put into my hands, by a gentleman, a volume of travels written by a French gentleman in 1659; in which he says he had been travelling a whole year in England, into every part of it, and conversed freely with all ranks of people; he found the whole nation earnestly engaged in discussing and contriving a form of government for their future regulations; there was but one point in which they all agreed, and in that they were unanimous: that monarchy, nobility, and prelacy never would exist in England again." The Doctor paused; and said: "Yet, in the very next year, the whole nation called in the King and run mad with nobility, monarchy, and prelacy. I am no King killer, merely because they are Kings. Poor creatures, they know no better; they believe sincerely and conscientiously that God made them to rule the world. I would not, therefore, behead them, or send them to St. Helena, to be treated as Bonaparte was; but I would shut them up like the man in the iron mask; feed them well, give

them as much finery as they pleased, until they could be converted to right reason and common sense." I have nothing to communicate from this part of the country, except that you must not be surprised if you hear something wonderful in Boston before long. With my profound respects for your family, and half a century's affection for yourself, I am your humble servant.

TO JAMES MADISON.

MONTICELLO, August 30, 1823.

DEAR SIR,—I received the enclosed letters from the President, with a request, that after perusal I would forward them to you, for perusal by yourself also, and to be returned then to him.

You have doubtless seen Timothy Pickering's Fourth of July observations on the Declaration of Independence. If his principles and prejudices, personal and political, gave us no reason to doubt whether he had truly quoted the information he alleges to have received from Mr. Adams, I should then say, that in some of the particulars, Mr. Adams' memory has led him into unquestionable error. At the age of eighty-eight, and forty-seven years after the transactions of Independence, this is not wonderful. Nor should I, at the age of eighty, on the small advantage of that difference only, venture to oppose my memory to his, were it not supported by written notes, taken by myself at the

moment and on the spot. He says, "the committee of five, to wit, Dr. Franklin, Sherman, Livingston, and ourselves, met, discussed the subject, and then appointed him and myself to make the draught; that we, as a sub-committee, met, and after the urgencies of each on the other, I consented to undertake the task; that the draught being made, we, the sub-committee, met, and conned the paper over, and he does not remember that he made or suggested a single alteration." Now these details are quite incorrect. The committee of five met; no such thing as a sub-committee was proposed, but they unanimously pressed on myself alone to undertake the draught. I consented; I drew it; but before I reported it to the committee, I communicated it *separately* to Dr. Franklin and Mr. Adams, requesting their corrections, because they were the two members of whose judgments and amendments I wished most to have the benefit, before presenting it to the committee; and you have seen the original paper now in my hands, with the corrections of Dr. Franklin and Mr. Adams interlined in their own handwritings. Their alterations were two or three only, and merely verbal. I then wrote a fair copy, reported it to the committee, and from them, unaltered, to Congress. This personal communication and consultation with Mr. Adams, he has misremembered into the actings of a sub-committee. Pickering's observations, and Mr.

Adams' in addition, "that it contained no new ideas, that it is a commonplace compilation, its sentiments hackneyed in Congress for two years before, and its essence contained in Otis' pamphlet," may all be true. Of that I am not to be the judge. Richard Henry Lee charged it as copied from Locke's treatise on government. Otis' pamphlet I never saw, and whether I had gathered my ideas from reading or reflection I do not know. I know only that I turned to neither book nor pamphlet while writing it. I did not consider it as any part of my charge to invent new ideas altogether, and to offer no sentiment which had ever been expressed before. Had Mr. Adams been so restrained, Congress would have lost the benefit of his bold and impressive advocations of the rights of Revolution. For no man's confident and fervid addresses, more than Mr. Adams', encouraged and supported us through the difficulties surrounding us, which, like the ceaseless action of gravity, weighed on us by night and by day. Yet, on the same ground, we may ask what of these elevated thoughts was new, or can be affirmed never before to have entered the conceptions of man?

Whether, also, the sentiments of Independence, and the reasons for declaring it, which make so great a portion of the instrument, had been hackneyed in Congress for two years before the 4th of July, '76, or this dictum also of Mr. Adams be another slip of memory, let history say. This, how-

ever, I will say for Mr. Adams, that he supported the Declaration with zeal and ability, fighting fearlessly for every word of it. As to myself, I thought it a duty to be, on that occasion, a passive auditor of the opinions of others, more impartial judges than I could be, of its merits or demerits. During the debate I was sitting by Doctor Franklin, and he observed that I was writhing a little under the acrimonious criticisms on some of its parts; and it was on that occasion, that by way of comfort, he told me the story of John Thompson, the hatter, and his new sign.

Timothy thinks the instrument the better for having a fourth of it expunged. He would have thought it still better, had the other three-fourths gone out also, all but the single sentiment (the only one he approves), which recommends friendship to his dear England, whenever she is willing to be at peace with us. His insinuations are, that although "the high tone of the instrument was in unison with the warm feelings of the times, this sentiment of habitual friendship to England should never be forgotten, and that the duties it enjoins should *especially* be borne in mind on every celebration of this anniversary." In other words, that the Declaration, as being a libel on the government of England, composed in times of passion, should now be buried in utter oblivion, to spare the feelings of our English friends and Angloman fellow citizens. But it is not to wound them that

we wish to keep it in mind; but to cherish the principles of the instrument in the bosoms of our own citizens: and it is a heavenly comfort to see that these principles are yet so strongly felt, as to render a circumstance so trifling as this little lapse of memory of Mr. Adams, worthy of being solemnly announced and supported at an anniversary assemblage of the nation on its birthday. In opposition, however, to Mr. Pickering, I pray God that these principles may be eternal, and close the prayer with my affectionate wishes for yourself of long life, health and happiness.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

MONTICELLO, September 4, 1823.

DEAR SIR,—Your letter of August the 15th was received in due time, and with the welcome of everything which comes from you. With its opinions on the difficulties of revolutions from despotism to freedom, I very much concur. The generation which commences a revolution rarely completes it. Habituated from their infancy to passive submission of body and mind to their kings and priests, they are not qualified when called on to think and provide for themselves; and their inexperience, their ignorance and bigotry make them instruments often, in the hands of the Bonapartes and Iturbides, to defeat their own rights and purposes. This is the present situation of Europe and Spanish America.

But it is not desperate. The light which has been shed on mankind by the art of printing, has eminently changed the condition of the world. As yet, that light has dawned on the middling classes only of the men in Europe. The kings and the rabble, of equal ignorance, have not yet received its rays; but it continues to spread, and while printing is preserved, it can no more recede than the sun return on his course. A first attempt to recover the right of self-government may fail, so may a second, a third, etc. But as a younger and more instructed race comes on, the sentiment becomes more and more intuitive, and a fourth, a fifth, or some subsequent one of the ever renewed attempts will ultimately succeed. In France, the first effort was defeated by Robespierre, the second by Bonaparte, the third by Louis XVIII. and his holy allies: another is yet to come, and all Europe, Russia excepted, has caught the spirit; and all will attain representative government, more or less perfect. This is now well understood to be a necessary check on kings, whom they will probably think it more prudent to chain and tame, than to exterminate. To attain all this, however, rivers of blood must yet flow, and years of desolation pass over; yet the object is worth rivers of blood, and years of desolation. For what inheritance so valuable, can man leave to his posterity? The spirit of the Spaniard, and his deadly and eternal hatred to a Frenchman, give me much confidence that he

will never submit, but finally defeat this atrocious violation of the laws of God and man, under which he is suffering; and the wisdom and firmness of the Cortes afford reasonable hope that that nation will settle down in a temperate representative government, with an executive properly subordinated to that. Portugal, Italy, Prussia, Germany, Greece, will follow suit. You and I shall look down from another world on these glorious achievements to man, which will add to the joys even of heaven.

I observe your toast of Mr. Jay on the 4th of July, wherein you say that the omission of his signature to the Declaration of Independence was by *accident*. Our impressions as to this fact being different, I shall be glad to have mine corrected, if wrong. Jay, you know, had been in constant opposition to our laboring majority. Our estimate at the time was, that he, Dickinson and Johnson of Maryland, by their ingenuity, perseverance and partiality to our English connection, had constantly kept us a year behind where we ought to have been in our preparations and proceedings. From about the date of the Virginia instructions of May the 15th, 1776, to declare Independence, Mr. Jay absented himself from Congress, and never came there again until December, 1778. Of course, he had no part in the discussions or decision of that question. The instructions to their Delegates by the Convention of New York, then sitting, to sign

the Declaration, were presented to Congress on the 15th of July only, and on that day the journals show the absence of Mr. Jay, by a letter received from him, as they had done as early as the 29th of May by another letter. And I think he had been omitted by the convention on a new election of Delegates, when they changed their instructions. Of this last fact, however, having no evidence but an ancient impression, I shall not affirm it. But whether so or not, no agency of *accident* appears in the case. This error of fact, however, whether yours or mine, is of little consequence to the public. But truth being as cheap as error, it is as well to rectify it for our own satisfaction.

I have had a fever of about three weeks, during the last and preceding month, from which I am entirely recovered except as to strength.

TO WILLIAM SHORT.

MONTICELLO, September 8, 1823.

DEAR SIR,—Your favor of July 28th, from Avon, came to hand on the 10th of August, and I have delayed answering it on the presumption of your continued absence, but the approach of the season of frost in that region has probably before this time turned you about to the south. I readily conceive that by the time of your return to Philadelphia, you will have had travelling enough for the present, and therefore acquiesce in your propo-

sition to give us the next season. Your own convenience is a sufficient reason, and an auxiliary one is that we shall then have more for you to see and approve. By that time, our rotunda, (the walls of which will be finished this month) will have received its roof, and will show itself externally to some advantage. Its columns only will be wanting, as they must await their capitals from Italy. We have just received from thence, and are now putting up, the marble capitals of the buildings we have already erected, which completes our whole system, except the rotunda and its adjacent gymnasia. All are now ready to receive their occupants, and should the legislature, at their next session, liberate our funds as is hoped, we shall ask but one year more to procure our professors, for most of whom we must go to Europe. In your substitution of Monticello instead of your annual visit to Black Rock, I will engage you equal health, and a more genial and pleasant climate; but instead of the flitting, flirting, and gay assemblage of that place, you must be contented with the plain and sober family and neighborly society, with the assurance that you shall hear no wrangling about the next President, although the excitement on that subject will then be at its acme. Numerous have been the attempts to entangle me in that imbroglio. But at the age of eighty, I seek quiet and abjure contention. I read but a single newspaper, Ritchie's Enquirer, the best that is

published or ever has been published in America. You should read it also, to keep yourself *au fait* of your own State, for we still claim you as belonging to us. A city life offers you indeed more means of dissipating time, but more frequent, also, and more painful objects of vice and wretchedness. New York, for example, like London, seems to be a Cloacina of all the depravities of human nature. Philadelphia doubtless has its share. Here, on the contrary, crime is scarcely heard of, breaches of order rare, and our societies, if not refined, are rational, moral, and affectionate at least. Our only blot is becoming less offensive by the great improvement in the condition and civilization of that race, who can now more advantageously compare their situation with that of the laborers of Europe. Still it is a hideous blot, as well from the heteromorph peculiarities of the race, as that, with them, physical compulsion to action must be substituted for the moral necessity which constrains the free laborers to work equally hard. We feel and deplore it morally and politically, and we look without entire despair to some redeeming means not yet specifically foreseen. I am happy in believing that the conviction of the necessity of removing this evil gains ground with time. Their emigration to the westward lightens the difficulty by dividing it, and renders it more practicable on the whole. And the neighborhood of a government of their color promises a more accessible asylum

than that from whence they came. Ever and affectionately yours.

TO THOMAS EARLE.

MONTICELLO, September 24, 1823.

SIR,—Your letter of August 28th, with the pamphlet accompanying it, was not received until the 18th instant.

That our Creator made the earth for the use of the living and not of the dead; that those who exist not can have no use nor right in it, no authority or power over it; that one generation of men cannot foreclose or burden its use to another, which comes to it in its own right and by the same divine beneficence; that a preceding generation cannot bind a succeeding one by its laws or contracts; these deriving their obligation from the will of the existing majority, and that majority being removed by death, another comes in its place with a will equally free to make its own laws and contracts; these are axioms so self-evident that no explanation can make them plainer; for he is not to be reasoned with who says that non-existence can control existence, or that nothing can move something. They are axioms also pregnant with salutary consequences. The laws of civil society indeed for the encouragement of industry, give the property of the parent to his family on his death, and in most civilized countries permit him even to give it, by testament,

to whom he pleases. And it is also found more convenient to suffer the laws of our predecessors to stand on our implied assent, as if positively re-enacted, until the existing majority positively repeals them. But this does not lessen the right of that majority to repeal whenever a change of circumstances or of will calls for it. Habit alone confounds what is civil practice with natural right.

On the merits of the pamphlet I say nothing of course; having found it necessary to decline giving opinions on books even when desired. For the functions of a reviewer, I have neither time, talent, nor inclination, and I trust that on reflection your indulgence will not think unreasonable my unwillingness to embark in an office of so little enticement. With my thanks for the pamphlet, be pleased to accept the assurance of my great respect.

TO HUGH P. TAYLOR.

MONTICELLO, October 4, 1823.

SIR,—You must, I think, have somewhat misunderstood what I may have said to you as to manuscripts in my possession relating to the antiquities, and particularly the Indian antiquities of our country. The only manuscripts I now possess are some folio volumes; two of these are the proceedings of the Virginia Company in England; the remaining four are of the Records of the Council of Virginia from 1622 to 1700. The account

of the two first volumes you will see in the preface to Stith's History of Virginia. They contain the records of the Virginia Company, copied from the originals, under the eye, if I recollect rightly, of the Earl of Southampton, a member of the company, bought at the sale of his library by Doctor Byrd, of Westover, and sold with that library to Isaac Zane. These volumes happened at the time of the sale, to have been borrowed by Colonel R. Bland, whose library I bought, and with this, they were sent to me. I gave notice of it to Mr. Zane, but he never reclaimed them. I shall deposit them in the library of the University, where they will be most likely to be preserved with care. The other four volumes, I am confident, are the original office records of the Council. My conjectures are that when Sr. John Randolph was about to begin the History of Virginia which he meant to write, he borrowed these volumes from the Council office, to collect from them materials for his work. He died before he had made any progress in that work, and they remained in his library, probably unobserved, during the whole life of the late Peyton Randolph, his son; from his executors I purchased his library in a lump, and these volumes were sent to me as a part of it. I found the leaves so rotten as often to crumble into dust on being handled; I bound them, therefore, together, that they might not be unnecessarily opened, and have thus preserved them forty-seven years. If my conjectures

are right, they must have been out of the public office about eighty years. I shall deposit them also with the others in the same library of the University, where they will be safer from injury than in a public office. I have promised, however, to trust them to Mr. Hening, if he will copy and publish them when he shall have finished his collection of the laws. For this he is peculiarly qualified, as well by his diligence as by his familiarity with our ancient manuscript characters, a familiarity very necessary for decyphering these volumes.

I agree with you that it is the duty of every good citizen to use all the opportunities which occur to him, for preserving documents relating to the history of our country. That I have not been remiss in this while I had youth, health, and opportunity, is proved otherwise, as well as by the materials I furnished towards Mr. Hening's invaluable collection of the laws of our country; but there is a time, and that time is come with me, when these duties are no more, when age and the wane of mind and memory, and the feebleness of the powers of life pass them over as a legacy to younger hands. I write now slowly, laboriously, painfully. I am obliged, therefore, to decline all correspondence which some moral duty does not urgently call on me to answer. I always trust that those who write them will read their answer in my age and silence, and see in these a manifestation that I am done with writing letters. I am sorry, therefore, that I

am not able to give any aid to the work you contemplate, other than my best wishes for its success, and to these I add the assurance of my great respect.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

MONTICELLO, October 12, 1823.

DEAR SIR,—I do not write with the ease which your letter of September the 18th supposes. Crippled wrists and fingers make writing slow and laborious. But while writing to you, I lose the sense of these things in the recollection of ancient times, when youth and health made happiness out of everything. I forget for a while the hoary winter of age, when we can think of nothing but how to keep ourselves warm, and how to get rid of our heavy hours until the friendly hand of death shall rid us of all at once. Against this *tedium vitæ*, however, I am fortunately mounted on a hobby, which, indeed, I should have better managed some thirty or forty years ago; but whose easy amble is still sufficient to give exercise and amusement to an octogenary rider. This is the establishment of a University, on a scale more comprehensive, and in a country more healthy and central than our old William and Mary, which these obstacles have long kept in a state of languor and inefficiency. But the tardiness with which such works proceed, may render it doubtful whether I shall live to see it go into action.

Putting aside these things, however, for the pres-

ent, I write this letter as due to a friendship coeval with our government, and now attempted to be poisoned, when too late in life to be replaced by new affections. I had for some time observed in the public papers, dark hints and mysterious innuendoes of a correspondence of yours with a friend, to whom you had opened your bosom without reserve, and which was to be made public by that friend or his representative. And now it is said to be actually published. It has not yet reached us, but extracts have been given, and such as seemed most likely to draw a curtain of separation between you and myself. Were there no other motive than that of indignation against the author of this outrage on private confidence, whose shaft seems to have been aimed at yourself more particularly, this would make it the duty of every honorable mind to disappoint that aim, by opposing to its impression a sevenfold shield of apathy and insensibility. With me, however, no such armor is needed. The circumstances of the times in which we have happened to live, and the partiality of our friends at a particular period, placed us in a state of apparent opposition, which some might suppose to be personal also; and there might not be wanting those who wished to make it so, by filling our ears with malignant falsehoods, by dressing up hideous phantoms of their own creation, presenting them to you under my name, to me under yours, and endeavoring to instil into our minds things concerning each other the most destitute of truth. And if

there had been, at any time, a moment when we were off our guard, and in a temper to let the whispers of these people make us forget what we had known of each other for so many years, and years of so much trial, yet all men who have attended to the workings of the human mind, who have seen the false colors under which passion sometimes dresses the actions and motives of others, have seen also those passions subsiding with time and reflection, dissipating like mists before the rising sun, and restoring to us the sight of all things in their true shape and colors. It would be strange indeed, if, at our years, we were to go back an age to hunt up imaginary or forgotten facts, to disturb the repose of affections so sweetening to the evening of our lives. Be assured, my dear Sir, that I am incapable of receiving the slightest impression from the effort now made to plant thorns on the pillow of age, worth and wisdom, and to sow tares between friends who have been such for near half a century. Beseeching you then, not to suffer your mind to be disquieted by this wicked attempt to poison its peace, and praying you to throw it by among the things which have never happened, I add sincere assurances of my unabated and constant attachment, friendship and respect.

Monroe Doctrine Letter

Fac-simile of Jefferson's Original Letter, written October 24, 1823.

Less than three years before his death, and when past eighty, Jefferson penned this most remarkable letter to James Monroe, giving his views of the now famous "Monroe Doctrine," and stating in clear, strong language the benefits of such an instrument to the conservation of the young United States and its interests. The allusion to Cuba contained in this letter seems nothing less than prophecy in the light of recent history.

- should mark it therefore advisable that the Executive should encourage the British government to a continuance in the dispositions expressed in these letters, by an assurance of his concurrence with them as far as his authority goes, and that as it may lead to war, the declaration of which requires an act of Congress, the case shall be laid before them for consideration at their first meeting, and under the reasonable aspect in which it is seen by himself.

I have been so long weaned from political subjects, and have so long ceased to take any interest in them, that I am sensible I am not qualified to offer opinions on them worthy of any attention but the question now proposed involves consequences so lasting, and effects so decisive of our future destinies as to rekindle all the interest I have heretofore felt on such occasions, and to induce me to the hazard of opinions, which will prove only my wish to contribute still my mite towards any thing which may be useful to our country and praying you to accept it at only what it is worth, I add the assurance of my constant and affectionate friendship and respect

Th. Jefferson

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (JAMES MONROE).

MONTICELLO, October 24, 1823.

DEAR SIR,—The question presented by the letters you have sent me, is the most momentous which has ever been offered to my contemplation since that of Independence. That made us a nation, this sets our compass and points the course which we are to steer through the ocean of time opening on us. And never could we embark on it under circumstances more auspicious. Our first and fundamental maxim should be, never to entangle ourselves in the broils of Europe. Our second, never to suffer Europe to intermeddle with cis-Atlantic affairs. America, North and South, has a set of interests distinct from those of Europe, and peculiarly her own. She should therefore have a system of her own, separate and apart from that of Europe. While the last is laboring to become the domicile of despotism, our endeavor should surely be, to make our hemisphere that of freedom. One nation, most of all, could disturb us in this pursuit; she now offers to lead, aid, and accompany us in it. By acceding to her proposition, we detach her from the bands, bring her mighty weight into the scale of free government, and emancipate a continent at one stroke, which might otherwise linger long in doubt and difficulty. Great Britain is the nation which can do us the most harm of any one, or all on earth; and with her on our side

we need not fear the whole world. With her then, we should most sedulously cherish a cordial friendship; and nothing would tend more to knit our affections than to be fighting once more, side by side, in the same cause. Not that I would purchase even her amity at the price of taking part in her wars. But the war in which the present proposition might engage us, should that be its consequence, is not her war, but ours. Its object is to introduce and establish the American system, of keeping out of our land all foreign powers, of never permitting those of Europe to intermeddle with the affairs of our nations. It is to maintain our own principle, not to depart from it. And if, to facilitate this, we can effect a division in the body of the European powers, and draw over to our side its most powerful member, surely we should do it. But I am clearly of Mr. Canning's opinion, that it will prevent instead of provoking war. With Great Britain withdrawn from their scale and shifted into that of our two continents, all Europe combined would not undertake such a war. For how would they propose to get at either enemy without superior fleets? Nor is the occasion to be slighted which this proposition offers, of declaring our protest against the atrocious violations of the rights of nations, by the interference of any one in the internal affairs of another, so flagitiously begun by Bonaparte, and now continued by the equally lawless Alliance, calling itself Holy.

But we have first to ask ourselves a question. Do

we wish to acquire to our own confederacy any one or more of the Spanish provinces? I candidly confess, that I have ever looked on Cuba as the most interesting addition which could ever be made to our system of States. The control which, with Florida Point, this island would give us over the Gulf of Mexico, and the countries and isthmus bordering on it, as well as all those whose waters flow into it, would fill up the measure of our political well-being. Yet, as I am sensible that this can never be obtained, even with her own consent, but by war; and its independence, which is our second interest, (and especially its independence of England,) can be secured without it, I have no hesitation in abandoning my first wish to future chances, and accepting its independence, with peace and the friendship of England, rather than its association, at the expense of war and her enmity.

I could honestly, therefore, join in the declaration proposed, that we aim not at the acquisition of any of those possessions, that we will not stand in the way of any amicable arrangement between them and the Mother country; but that we will oppose, with all our means, the forcible interposition of any other power, as auxiliary, stipendiary, or under any other form or pretext, and most especially, their transfer to any power by conquest, cession, or acquisition in any other way. I should think it, therefore, advisable, that the Executive should encourage the British government to a continuance in the dispo-

sitions expressed in these letters, by an assurance of his concurrence with them as far as his authority goes; and that as it may lead to war, the declaration of which requires an act of Congress, the case shall be laid before them for consideration at their first meeting, and under the reasonable aspect in which it is seen by himself.

I have been so long weaned from political subjects, and have so long ceased to take any interest in them, that I am sensible I am not qualified to offer opinions on them worthy of any attention. But the question now proposed involves consequences so lasting, and effects so decisive of our future destinies, as to rekindle all the interest I have heretofore felt on such occasions, and to induce me to the hazard of opinions, which will prove only my wish to contribute still my mite towards anything which may be useful to our country. And praying you to accept it at only what it is worth, I add the assurance of my constant and affectionate friendship and respect.

TO MONSIEUR A. CORAY.

MONTICELLO, October 31, 1823.

DEAR SIR,—Your favor of July 10th is lately received. I recollect with pleasure the short opportunity of acquaintance with you afforded me in Paris, by the kindness of Mr. Paradise, and the fine editions of the classical writers of Greece which have been announced by you from time to time, have

never permitted me to lose the recollection. Until those of Aristotle's Ethics, and the Strategicos of Onesander, with which you have now favored me, and for which I pray you to accept my thanks, I had seen only your Lives of Plutarch. These I had read, and profited much by your valuable Scholia, and the aid of a few words from a modern Greek dictionary, would, I believe, have enabled me to read your patriotic addresses to your countrymen.

You have certainly begun at the right end towards preparing them for the great object they are now contending for, by improving their minds and qualifying them for self-government. For this they will owe you lasting honors. Nothing is more likely to forward this object than a study of the fine models of science left by their ancestors, to whom *we* also are all indebted for the lights which originally led ourselves out of Gothic darkness.

No people sympathize more feelingly than ours with the sufferings of your countrymen, none offer more sincere and ardent prayers to heaven for their success. And nothing indeed but the fundamental principle of our government, never to entangle us with the broils of Europe, could restrain our generous youth from taking some part in this holy cause. Possessing ourselves the combined blessing of liberty and order, we wish the same to other countries, and to none more than yours, which, the first of civilized nations, presented examples of what man should be. Not, indeed, that the forms of government adapted

to their age and country are practicable or to be imitated in our day, although prejudices in their favor would be natural enough to your people. The circumstances of the world are too much changed for that. The government of Athens, for example, was that of the people of one city making laws for the whole country subjected to them. That of Lacedæmon was the rule of military monks over the laboring class of the people, reduced to abject slavery. These are not the doctrines of the present age. The equal rights of man, and the happiness of every individual, are now acknowledged to be the only legitimate objects of government. Modern times have the signal advantage, too, of having discovered the only device by which these rights can be secured, to wit: government by the people, acting not in person, but by representatives chosen by themselves, that is to say, by every man of ripe years and sane mind, who either contributes by his purse or person to the support of his country. The small and imperfect mixture of representative government in England, impeded as it is by other branches, aristocratical and hereditary, shows yet the power of the representative principle towards improving the condition of man. With us, all the branches of the government are elective by the people themselves, except the judiciary, of whose science and qualifications they are not competent judges. Yet, even in that department, we call in a jury of the people to decide all controverted matters of fact, because to that investigation they

are entirely competent, leaving thus as little as possible, merely the law of the case, to the decision of the judges. And true it is that the people, especially when moderately instructed, are the only safe, because the only honest, depositories of the public rights, and should therefore be introduced into the administration of them in every function to which they are sufficient; they will err sometimes and accidentally, but never designedly, and with a systematic and persevering purpose of overthrowing the free principles of the government. Hereditary bodies, on the contrary, always existing, always on the watch for their own aggrandizement, profit of every opportunity of advancing the privileges of their order, and encroaching on the rights of the people.

The public papers tell us that your nation has established a government of some kind, without informing us what it is. This is certainly necessary for the direction of the war, but I presume it is intended to be temporary only, as a permanent constitution must be the work of quiet, leisure, much inquiry, and great deliberation. The extent of our country was so great, and its former division into distinct States so established, that we thought it better to confederate as to foreign affairs only. Every State retained its self-government in domestic matters, as better qualified to direct them to the good and satisfaction of their citizens, than a general government so distant from its remoter citizens, and

so little familiar with the local peculiarities of the different parts. But I presume that the extent of country with you, which may liberate itself from the Turks, is not too large to be associated under a single government, and that the particular constitutions of our several States, therefore, and not that of our federal government, will furnish the basis best adapted to your situation. There are now twenty-four of these distinct States, none smaller perhaps than your Morea, several larger than all Greece. Each of these has a constitution framed by itself and for itself, but militating in nothing with the powers of the General Government in its appropriate department of war and foreign affairs. These constitutions being in print and in every hand, I shall only make brief observations on them, and on those provisions particularly which have not fulfilled expectations, or which, being varied in different States, leave a choice to be made of that which is best. You will find much good in all of them, and no one which would be approved in all its parts. Such indeed are the different circumstances, prejudices, and habits of different nations, that the constitution of no one would be reconcilable to any other in every point. A judicious selection of the parts of each suitable to any other, is all which prudence should attempt; this will appear from a review of some parts of our constitutions.

Our executives are elected by the people for terms of one, two, three, or four years, under the names of

Governors or Presidents, and are reëligible a second time, or after a certain term, if approved by the people. May your Ethnarch be elective also? or does your position among the warring powers of Europe need an office more permanent, and a leader more stable? Surely you will make him single. For if experience has ever taught a truth, it is that a plurality in the supreme Executive will forever split into discordant factions, distract the nation, annihilate its energies, and force the nation to rally under a single head, generally an usurper. We have, I think, fallen on the happiest of all modes of constituting the Executive, that of easing and aiding our President, by permitting him to choose Secretaries of State, of Finance, of War, and of the Navy, with whom he may advise, either separately or all together, and remedy their divisions by adopting or controlling their opinions at his discretion; this saves the nation from the evils of a divided will, and secures to it a steady march in the systematic course which the President may have adopted for that of his administration.

Our legislatures are composed of two Houses, the Senate and Representatives, elected in different modes, and for different periods, and in some States, with a qualified veto in the Executive chief. But to avoid all temptation to superior pretensions of the one over the other House, and the possibility of either erecting itself into a privileged order, might it not be better to choose at the same time and in the same

mode, a body sufficiently numerous to be divided by lot into two separate Houses, acting as independently as the two Houses in England, or in our governments, and to shuffle their names together and re-distribute them by lot, once a week for a fortnight? This would equally give the benefit of time and separate deliberation, guard against an absolute passage by acclamation, derange cabals, intrigues, and the count of noses, disarm the ascendency which a popular demagogue might at any time obtain over either House, and render impossible all disputes between the two Houses, which often form such obstacles to business.

Our different States have differently modified their several judiciaries as to the tenure of office. Some appoint their judges for a given term of time; some continue them *during good behavior*, and that to be determined on by the concurring vote of *two-thirds* of each legislative House. In England they are removable by a *majority* only of each House. The last is a practicable remedy; the second is not. The combination of the friends and associates of the accused, the action of personal and party passions, and the sympathies of the human heart, will forever find means of influencing one-third of either the one or the other House, will thus secure their impunity, and establish them in fact for life. The first remedy is the best, that of appointing for a term of years only, with a capacity of reappointment if their conduct has been approved. At the establishment of our constitu-

tions, the judiciary bodies were supposed to be the most helpless and harmless members of the government. Experience, however, soon showed in what way they were to become the most dangerous; that the insufficiency of the means provided for their removal gave them a freehold and irresponsibility in office; that their decisions, seeming to concern individual suitors only, pass silent and unheeded by the public at large; that these decisions, nevertheless, become law by precedent, sapping, by little and little, the foundations of the constitution, and working its change by construction, before any one has perceived that that invisible and helpless worm has been busily employed in consuming its substance. In truth, man is not made to be trusted for life, if secured against all liability to account.

The constitutions of some of our States have made it a duty of their government to provide with due care for the public education. This we divide into three grades: 1. Primary schools, in which are taught reading, writing, and common arithmetic, to every infant of the State, male and female. 2. Intermediate schools, in which an education is given proper for artificers and the middle vocations of life; in grammar, for example, general history, logarithms, arithmetic, plane trigonometry, mensuration, the use of the globes, navigation, the mechanical principles, the elements of natural philosophy, and, as a preparation for the University, the Greek and Latin languages. 3. An University, in which these and all

other useful sciences shall be taught in their highest degree; the expenses of these institutions are defrayed partly by the public, and partly by the individuals profiting of them.

But, whatever be the constitution, great care must be taken to provide a mode of amendment, when experience or change of circumstances shall have manifested that any part of it is unadapted to the good of the nation. In some of our States it requires a new authority from the whole people, acting by their representatives, chosen for this express purpose, and assembled in convention. This is found too difficult for remedying the imperfections which experience develops from time to time in an organization of the first impression. A greater facility of amendment is certainly requisite to maintain it in a course of action accommodated to the times and changes through which we are ever passing. In England the constitution may be altered by a single act of the legislature, which amounts to the having no constitution at all. In some of our States, an act passed by two different legislatures, chosen by the people, at different and successive elections, is sufficient to make a change in the constitution. As this mode may be rendered more or less easy, by requiring the approbation of fewer or more successive legislatures, according to the degree of difficulty thought sufficient, and yet safe, it is evidently the best principle which can be adopted for constitutional amendments.

I have stated that the constitutions of our several States vary more or less in some particulars. But there are certain principles in which all agree, and which all cherish as vitally essential to the protection of the life, liberty, property, and safety of the citizen.

1. Freedom of religion, restricted only from *acts* of trespass on that of others.

2. Freedom of person, securing every one from imprisonment, or other bodily restraint, but by the laws of the land. This is effected by the well-known law of *habeas corpus*.

3. Trial by jury, the best of all safeguards for the person, the property, and the fame of every individual.

4. The exclusive right of legislation and taxation in the representatives of the people.

5. Freedom of the press, subject only to liability for personal injuries. This formidable censor of the public functionaries, by arraigning them at the tribunal of public opinion, produces reform peaceably, which must otherwise be done by revolution. It is also the best instrument for enlightening the mind of man, and improving him as a rational, moral, and social being.

I have thus, dear Sir, according to your request, given you some thoughts on the subject of national government. They are the result of the observations and reflections of an octogenary, who has passed fifty years of trial and trouble in the various grades of his country's service. They are yet but

outlines which you will better fill up, and accommodate to the habits and circumstances of your countrymen. Should they furnish a single idea which may be useful to them, I shall fancy it a tribute rendered to the manes of your Homer, your Demosthenes, and the splendid constellation of sages and heroes, whose blood is still flowing in your veins, and whose merits are still resting, as a heavy debt, on the shoulders of the living, and the future races of men. While we offer to heaven the warmest supplications for the restoration of your countrymen to the freedom and science of their ancestors, permit me to assure yourself of the cordial esteem and high respect which I bear and cherish towards yourself personally.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE.

MONTICELLO, November 4, 1823.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Two dislocated wrists and crippled fingers have rendered writing so slow and laborious, as to oblige me to withdraw from nearly all correspondence; not, however, from yours, while I can make a stroke with a pen. We have gone through too many trying scenes together, to forget the sympathies and affections they nourished.

Your trials have indeed been long and severe. When they will end, is yet unknown, but where they will end, cannot be doubted. Alliances, Holy or Hellish, may be formed, and retard the epoch of

deliverance, may swell the rivers of blood which are yet to flow, but their own will close the scene, and leave to mankind the right of self-government. I trust that Spain will prove, that a nation cannot be conquered which determines not to be so, and that her success will be the turning of the tide of liberty, no more to be arrested by human efforts. Whether the state of society in Europe can bear a republican government, I doubted, you know, when with you, and I do now. An hereditary chief, strictly limited, the right of war vested in the legislative body, a rigid economy of the public contributions, and absolute interdiction of all useless expenses, will go far towards keeping the government honest and unoppressive. But the only security of all, is in a free press. The force of public opinion cannot be resisted, when permitted freely to be expressed. The agitation it produces must be submitted to. It is necessary, to keep the waters pure.

We are all, for example, in agitation even in our peaceful country. For in peace as well as in war, the mind must be kept in motion. Who is to be the next President, is the topic here of every conversation. My opinion on that subject is what I expressed to you in my last letter. The question will be ultimately reduced to the northernmost and southernmost candidate. The former will get every federal vote in the Union, and many republicans; the latter, all of those denominated *of the old school;* for you are not to believe that these two parties are

amalgamated, that the lion and the lamb are lying down together. The Hartford Convention, the victory of Orleans, the peace of Ghent, prostrated the name of federalism. Its votaries abandoned it through shame and mortification; and now call themselves republicans. But the name alone is changed, the principles are the same. For in truth, the parties of Whig and Tory, are those of nature. They exist in all countries, whether called by these names, or by those of Aristocrats and Democrats, Coté Droite and Coté Gauche, Ultras and Radicals, Serviles, and Liberals. The sickly, weakly, timid man, fears the people, and is a Tory by nature. The healthy, strong and bold, cherishes them, and is formed a Whig by nature. On the eclipse of federalism with us, although not its extinction, its leaders got up the Missouri question, under the false front of lessening the measure of slavery, but with the real view of producing a geographical division of parties, which might insure them the next President. The people of the North went blindfold into the snare, followed their leaders for awhile with a zeal truly moral and laudable, until they became sensible that they were injuring instead of aiding the real interests of the slaves, that they had been used merely as tools for electioneering purposes; and that trick of hypocrisy then fell as quickly as it had been got up. To that is now succeeding a distinction, which, like that of Republican and Federal, or Whig and Tory, being equally intermixed through

every State, threatens none of those geographical schisms which go immediately to a separation. The line of division now, is the preservation of State rights, as reserved in the Constitution, or by strained constructions of that instrument, to merge all into a consolidated government. The Tories are for strengthening the Executive and General Government; the Whigs cherish the representative branch, and the rights reserved by the States, as the bulwark against consolidation, which must immediately generate monarchy. And although this division excites, as yet, no warmth, yet it exists, is well understood, and will be a principle of voting at the ensuing election, with the reflecting men of both parties.

I thank you much for the two books you were so kind as to send me by Mr. Gallatin. Miss Wright had before favored me with the first edition of her American work; but her "Few Days in Athens," was entirely new, and has been a treat to me of the highest order. The matter and manner of the dialogue is strictly ancient; and the principles of the sects are beautifully and candidly explained and contrasted; and the scenery and portraiture of the interlocutors are of higher finish than anything in that line left us by the ancients; and like Ossian, if not ancient, it is equal to the best morsels of antiquity. I augur, from this instance, that Herculaneum is likely to furnish better specimens of modern than of ancient genius; and may we not hope more from the same pen?

After much sickness, and the accident of a broken and disabled arm, I am again in tolerable health, but extremely debilitated, so as to be scarcely able to walk into my garden. The hebetude of age, too, and extinguishment of interest in the things around me, are weaning me from them, and dispose me with cheerfulness to resign them to the existing generation, satisfied that the daily advance of science will enable them to administer the commonwealth with increased wisdom. You have still many valuable years to give to your country, and with my prayers that they may be years of health and happiness, and especially that they may see the establishment of the principles of government which you have cherished through life, accept the assurance of my affectionate and constant friendship and respect.

Stanford University Libraries
3 6105 020 059 890

J0
J45L

STANFORD UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES
STANFORD AUXILIARY LIBRARY
STANFORD, CALIFORNIA 94305-6004
(415) 723-9201
All books may be recalled after 7 days

DATE DUE